

THE GRAMOPHONE

London Office:
58, Frith Street,
London, W.1.

Edited by
COMPTON MACKENZIE

TELEPHONE: Regent 1383

Vol. III.

SEPTEMBER, 1925

No. 4

All communications should be addressed to this office. In the case of MSS. or of letters requiring an answer an addressed and stamped envelope MUST be enclosed.

All cheques, money orders and postal orders should be in favour of "Gramophone (Publications) Ltd.," and should be crossed "Bank of Liverpool and Martins Ltd."

Any difficulty in procuring copies of THE GRAMOPHONE, and any suggestion for increasing the circulation, should be forwarded to the Publications Manager; any inquiry about advertisement rates to the Advertisement Manager at the above address.

For the convenience of readers the following are kept in stock:—

Index to Vol. I., 1s. 6d. post free; Index to Vol. I. and Binding Case, in black cloth with gold lettering, 4s. 6d. post free. Index to Vol. II., 1s., postage 2d.

Red cloth spring-back Binding Case (for the preservation of current numbers), 3s. 6d., postage 6d.

"A List of Recorded Chamber Music" (N.G.S. booklet), 6d., postage 1d.

"Wilson Protractor," 1s., postage 2d.

"Gramophone Tips, 1925," by Capt. H. T. Barnett, M.I.E.E., 1s., post free.

"Gramophone Nights," by Compton Mackenzie and Archibald Marshall, 5s., postage 4d.

Back numbers of THE GRAMOPHONE, Vol. I., 1s. each and postage 2d. (except Nos. 2 and 4 which are out of print). Vol. II., Nos. 1 to 12 inclusive, and Vol. III., Nos. 1 and 2, 2s. each and postage 2d.

The annual subscription for THE GRAMOPHONE is 14s. post free from the London Office.



THE AUGUST RECORDS

By THE EDITOR

AMONG the profoundest intimations of human immortality I should place the poetry of William Blake and the music of César Franck; and of that music I should choose the *Quartet in D* to disturb the security of a materialist. He requires no medium's manipulating paws, who can turn the table of his gramophone and evoke these celestial strains. Forgive the trite and feeble paragon, you who have tried to swim heavenward across the sweetness of *The Lost Chord* or Braga's luscious *Serenade* until you have comprehended at last that your efforts were as vain as the struggles of a fly in treacle. I suspect that even the most accomplished listener will not appreciate this quartet until he has heard it several times, for, to say truth, several accomplished listeners to chamber music have told me in days gone by that they thought the *Quartet in D* verging on dullness. It may be that many of the readers who, I hope, will have been lured into paradise upon these six black discs from H.M.V., will find them dull at first. The other music of Franck that we possess for the gramophone is much "easier" than this quartet. In this overtaxed time of ours a man may grudge thirty-nine shillings for a merely contingent glimpse of Heaven. God Himself

could but say "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." It is idle to go to one of those little conservatories of sound and expect to find out if you like these records by playing them over once. They are for the solitude of your own room; ah yes, but they are for more than that—they are for the solitude of your own soul. The playing by the Virtuoso Quartet is the best they have given as yet. The scratch, though not nearly so loud as in any of their previous records, is nevertheless more damnable than I have ever thought it. I tried fibre, but that was no good, and so the vile sound must somehow be thought away like the sounds of this fretful world.

The outstanding vocal record last month was McCormack in two of Brahms' most exquisite songs. We have heard a great deal from our correspondents lately about the excellence of the Polydor vocal records, but you can take it from me that no record of the best German *lieder* singers can touch this one. Like every great versatile genius McCormack is suffering from the inability of so many critics to grasp that an artist may be superlatively good in different kinds of singing. I took the trouble to read several of the notices of his first concert in May,

at which I was present, and I noticed that while he was praised for his Irish folk-songs, his Mozart arias and his *lieder* were merely condescended to. Well, I've yet to hear Mozart or Brahms better sung by any contemporary. Then I read effusive praise of Frank Mullings as an operatic performer. To be sure, he makes singing sound a deuced difficult business, but when will the critics and the public digest that stale old Horatian maxim: *Ars est celare artem*? You don't praise a wheel for squeaking or an engine for clanking, then why praise an actor, or a writer, or a singer, or a pianist for showing his works all the time? The Columbia record of Frank Mullings in *Butterfly* sounds as if Sharpless were trying to throttle Pinkerton. No doubt he would have liked to, but it doesn't happen to be in the opera. The record itself is first class, and Miriam Licette sings well, provided that you don't want to hear more than one word in ten of the idiotic English. Madame Stralia has a voice that I greatly admire, and she has given us some really good records; but the sooner she stops trying to sing bad ballads, the better for her reputation and the pleasanter for us. I should not quarrel with her for a moment if she sang them well. I should recognise her right to cater for all tastes, if she were a good caterer. But all she does is to use her fine voice as unintelligently as a railway-engine might use its whistle on a concert platform, and this helps nobody. One of the ballads is called *I hear you singing*. But the trouble is that we hear *her* singing. If she *could* hear some of us singing, we might get back on her. I enjoyed the H.M.V. record of Maartje Offers and Tina Poli-Randacio in one of the great duets of *Aida*, but I don't fancy it is really very good singing. I think Mr. Klein might be a little severe on both ladies. Still, as I say, I enjoyed it in an uncritical mood. But I enjoyed much more the lovely performance of Heckmann-Bettendorf in two monologues from the *Rosenkavalier*. This is a really good Parlophone, and the orchestral part is excellent.

We had some particularly interesting singing records from Vocalion and Aco. I liked the Frank Titterton record better than any of his I have heard, particularly *Jenny's Mantle* which is a Welsh folk-song from that splendid collection, *Songs of Four Nations*. He sings *Turn Ye to Me* as well as most singers, but after McCormack I can't hear anybody else in this. By the way "Mhaire" should be pronounced more like Marie than Mary. Another best record is Watcyn Watcyns in Stanford's magnificent song *The Pibroch*, which he gives really well. He is equally good in the dull song from *Tom Jones* on the other side. Constance Willis must be praised for giving us a couple of what most people would call good songs, though I myself don't care for either of them.

Now I want to draw your particular attention to two splendid Aco records by Joan Vincent and

Stella Murray. Delicious songs on both sides charmingly sung and well recorded. Five shillings will secure five songs. Do let us encourage good work like this. Another Aco record worthy of anybody's attention is that of Eileen Andjelkovitch playing the *Chanson Hindoue* and Beethoven's *Minuet in G*. She has an exceptionally rich tone and a great deal of temperament. It's no use our shouting for cheaper records unless you support good cheap records when they appear, and here are three that genuinely deserve support. I forgot to mention a good Brunswick record last quarter, which was Frederick Schorr in a lovely Beethoven song on one side and on the other an equally lovely Schubert. His voice is a little rough, but the style is impeccable. I did not much care for the Richard Bohnen record of the two arias from *The Magic Flute*. Like Prospero's long speeches Sarastro's arias are no doubt very good, but they bore me. A lot of pretentious nonsense has been written about this opera. One day in these pages I shall give myself the pleasure of tilting at the allegorical windmill which zealous freemasons have built above Mozart's unknown tomb. The Marie Morrissey record from Brunswick consisted of two intolerable songs accompanied by a piano quintet. One is called *Just A-Wearyin' For You*. "Of" would be a more suitable preposition than "for." A pity, because the lady has a really good contralto.

There are three piano records in the H.M.V. bulletin. I suppose the Company knows its own business best, but I should have thought the policy of issuing a bunch of tenors one month and a bunch of basses the next, a bunch of violinists and then a bunch of pianists, was a mistake. Of course, the outstanding record is the Pachmann, including the cross-word puzzle of his asides. This is not the time of day to praise Pachmann in Chopin. The point is that here is one of the new electrical recordings, and obviously the piano has never been nearly so well recorded before. But don't play it with a steel needle. Without admitting any kind of argument at all about it, I say that fibre is infinitely more successful. In fact, with fibre you have the piano. The trouble with this electrical recording is going to be the telephonic effect. I haven't spotted any electrical recordings of the voice yet, though rumour says that the last McCormack is one. If it is, then fibre is no more use for that with the voice than it ever was, except to die-hard fibreurs. What about fibre with orchestral recordings? The only one that I suspect is that of the New Light Symphony Orchestra in last month's H.M.V. bulletin. On the whole, I think that fibre wins, but I don't intend to argue this point until I have heard more. I'm inclined to think that the Cortot record may be an electrical recording. It is certainly much better on fibre. With steel the piano in this sounds like a new instrument that is something between a gong and a

musical glass. Of definitely non-electrical piano records the Una Bourne and York Bowen are both charming. Band records continue unusually good. I thought the Columbia Grenadiers were really capital last month in a selection of Wilfred Sander-son's songs. I was hoping for some good light and comic records in August, but nothing has come along. To be sure, the dances are excellent. My pick would be the two Denza's from Columbia and a jewel from H.M.V., *Ah-ha* and *Just a little drink*. The Trix Sisters aren't the goods for my taste. Genteel American is as tiresome as genteel Cockney, and we are suffering from a surfeit of both on the London musical stage at present.

Columbia gave us two splendid orchestral records—the *Hansel and Gretel* Overture and the *Liebestod*. To "what is the best record" fiends I say confidently these are the best records of both pieces of music up to date. Parlophone gave us a good *Flying Dutchman* Overture and other excerpts from the opera conducted by Siegfried Wagner, though for my taste they were much too mild an interpretation. Parlophone gave us, too, an interesting occasional piece by Beethoven, and everything by Beethoven is precious. It is not, however, one of the great man's inspired efforts. I was most impressed by the Parlophone record of Berlioz' *Roman Carnival*, which struck me as one of the most successful orchestral recordings I've heard. That was on the Balmain. Unfortunately the hole is too small to fit on any other of my machines, so I can't tell how it comes off on them, and the record is too good to risk breaking. Of course, the Marek Webers are splendid. They always are. I shan't mention them again till I get a bad one. Edith Lorand was in good form with a pot-pourri of *Traviata*. That's another subject for some tilting presently. I'm prepared to defend *Traviata* against anybody. The other orchestral record last month was from Vocalion with Delius' *On first hearing the cuckoo in Spring* and *Long before Sunrise* played by the Chamber Orchestra, which lately gave us such an excellent version of the *Siegfried Idyll*. Delius in this mood always reminds me of a schoolmaster on his holidays. I feel that an accomplished mind is reacting in an accomplished way to the conventional rustic emotions that Mr. Pickwick expressed on that May morning at Dingley Dell. I wish that our English composers of the austere school would find a new folk-song rhythm for their pastoral moods. I believe that Mr. A. E. Housman's *Shropshire Lad* is at the root of the convention. I prefer the eighteenth-century Corydons to that preposterous figure whose charming bucolics have haunted the fancy of so many modern writers of verse and prose, whether he is meditating on the Romans at Uriconium, or the hangman's rope, or the Queen's shilling, or cherry trees in bloom. I am far from denying the attractiveness either of *A Shropshire*

Lad as a book of verse or of this country music of Delius. But in both art is proclaiming itself all the time. The simplicity at which both the writer and the composer aim is achieved indeed, but always at the expense of nature. As for the record itself, I don't feel convinced that it is a very good one.

With the courteous help of His Master's Voice I shall shortly in response to numerous requests give readers my views on the Number 2 Catalogue. The November number will be largely devoted to an account of the happy combination. I must apologise to several readers to whose queries I have not replied. In two cases I mislaid the letters, and have lost their addresses. But if I am to write this autumn the various articles I have promised, in addition to my own work, I must plead for a complete holiday from private correspondence. I hope that our expert committee will be able to reply to most queries.

I have to acknowledge with my thanks the receipt of two delightful Pixie Grippas at Jethou, both of which have been baptised by moonlight dancing.

COMPTON MACKENZIE.



Competitions

Two important competitions closed on August 31st—the Publicity Competition and the Twenty-Five Records Competition, started in the July number on the suggestion of Mr. George Blake. The results will be announced next month.

As a side-line in competitions we offer FIFTEEN SHILLINGS' WORTH of H.M.V. records to the first reader who sends us the words spoken by M. Pachmann when recording the *Nocturne in B major* (D.B.859). Any reader who was present on that occasion and helped to create the genial atmosphere of a wrapt audience for Pachmann is ineligible; but we should be glad to receive his or her version of the comments in order to check it with the suggestions of other competitors who have only their gramophones to assist them.

TO SINGERS: TAUGHT OR UNTAUGHT

Mr. HERMAN KLEIN

may be consulted upon all subjects connected with

The Training of the Voice

and

The Art of Singing

by appointment, at his Studio Residence,

PRIVATE LESSONS.

40, AVENUE ROAD,
REGENT'S PARK,
N.W. 8

Telephone,
HAMPSTEAD 47.

THE GRAMOPHONE AND THE SINGER

(Continued)

By HERMAN KLEIN

The Treasures of Meyerbeer—I.

FOR some years now Meyerbeer has ceased to be a fashionable composer. When Wagner came into favour his old rival slowly but surely made his exit from a scene where there was apparently not room for both at the same time. I say "apparently" because in reality, as was proved by certain exceptions, there was ample space for the two masters in the affections of opera-lovers who could see good in each. Thus in France, where Meyerbeer was nurtured, so to speak; where his most important operas were first given to the world; where the greatest dramatic singers of their time devoted themselves to the study and exposition of his music—in France, I say, he is nearly as popular to-day, with certain sections of the public who support their operatic institutions, as he was fifty years ago. In America, too—South as well as North—they still go to hear him occasionally, when visited by tenors of that heroic order to whom Jean de Reszke, Tamagno and Caruso belonged (alas, there are now only a few second-rate imitations of them available) and where the Meyerbeer traditions have not yet wholly faded into oblivion. But these places are only the exceptions. In most countries that I am acquainted with, including more particularly this tight little island of ours, the chauvinists and the highbrows have taken excellent care so to discredit Meyerbeer and all his works in the minds of their fellow-men that there would seem to be little chance of reinstating him in their favour, as one of them has just said, this side of the year 2020.

It is the highbrows who are chiefly responsible. As in the case of the celebrated Dr. Fell, the "reason why they cannot tell"; but they hate Meyerbeer, and they have hated him this many a year, with a hatred that is almost fanatical in its intensity. It started in a gingerly sort of way in the 'eighties among the disciples of Stanford and Parry, victims of *trop de zèle*—critics and others whose onslaughts gathered strength as time went on, and the object of their dislike grew less and less recognizable under their continuous mud-slinging. But managers like Augustus Harris and Carl Rosa did not share the views of these young men. They liked Meyerbeer, and continued to revive and mount his operas to the end of their careers, to the entire satisfaction of the British public, side by side with their memorable productions of the whole of the Wagner repertory.

So long as these two great impresarios survived there was ample room, most assuredly, for both Wagner and Meyerbeer; but when they died it did not take long for the highbrows to get the upper hand. The example of Bayreuth, of Munich, nay, even of Dresden, proved too powerful for the newly-educated minds of the rising generation, and it quickly became impossible for the one school to tolerate the other. If you loved Wagner, you must necessarily desire to send Meyerbeer to the bottomless pit! Only let me point out that, so recently as the opening year of the present century, a great operatic centre like Vienna was still able to tolerate and enjoy the much derided combination. When I was there in 1901 I was present at one of the finest performances of *Le Prophète* that I ever witnessed. And who should be the Jean de Leyden (the pseudo-Prophet) on that occasion but the famous tenor Winkelmann, who had succeeded Niemann at Bayreuth, and created Tristan and Lohengrin and Walther in German in London at Drury Lane, under Hans Richter!

A few months ago I was moved to write a couple of articles for a leading American daily paper on the subject of "The Singing of Meyerbeer," wherein I think I made it clear that the main trouble about his music was not its "insincerity" or lack of beauty, but the technical difficulties which it presented to the average opera singer of to-day. For years one has heard that parrot-cry of insincerity *à propos* of Meyerbeer. According to the purists, he could do nothing right—probably because he did not slavishly follow in the footsteps of others. If he showed originality he took liberties; if he wrote melodies he was commonplace and sought only to please by writing down to the level of a vulgar taste. His gifts may have been great,—but he himself was not a great man; in short, he never had the will or the courage to express himself, and consequently was never sincere. Well, I do not agree with all this because I know that it is based upon a warped and prejudiced judgment; also because I am too well acquainted with Meyerbeer and his works to heed such one-sided diatribes. The latest of them was an article in the July number of *Music and Letters*, bearing the title of "The Tragedy of Meyerbeer," and signed A. E. Brent Smith, a name with which I do not happen to be acquainted. It contains the customary stream of abuse and

depreciation, the main theme of which is that Meyerbeer was a spiritual coward and "prepared to barter his soul for a mess of admiration." It interested me solely because it appeared just at a moment when I was making ready to write a series of articles quite in the opposite sense for this magazine. For aught I can tell, it may have been called forth by my American articles already referred to. But I am not going to repeat those arguments now; indeed there is no necessity to do so.

The best defence, the strongest justification for Meyerbeer, lies in his music. If we cannot at present get his operas, we can get the next best thing in the form of gramophone records of his finest and most popular airs. They are not among the latest items in the leading catalogues, for the obvious reasons that they have not been in such demand recently as when the Meyerbeer works were being more universally performed. Nevertheless, they are mostly by first-rate artists, as indeed they had to be if they were to be sung with adequate skill; for the calls that this music makes upon the singer are as exacting in their way as those of any music in existence. On what grounds it can honestly be charged with "insincerity," it passes my comprehension to perceive. Take the big operas scene by scene, from *Robert le Diable*, which has scarcely been heard here within living memory (I heard it at Drury Lane, when a boy, with Nilsson, Ilma di Murska, Mongini, Gardoni, and Foli in the cast), down to *L'Africaine*, which Augustus Harris revived magnificently at Covent Garden in 1888, his first season there. The airs are remarkable for their inventive skill, their sense of appropriate feeling; their rare power of graphic illustration, whether of the bizarre or the beautiful, the tragic or the comic, the trivial or the grandiose. Their form and treatment, like that of the ensembles and choruses, may be what is now termed old-fashioned; but do we complain of this in the operas of Mozart and Gluck, of Beethoven and Weber? Can any of them show us examples of gorgeous lyric splendour, of tonal combinations more dramatic and imposing, than the great ensembles in the second and fourth acts of *Les Huguenots*, the coronation scene in *Le Prophète*, and the ship episode in *L'Africaine*?

It is all a question of taste, I admit. It was a matter of taste when we began to love Wagner; to prefer the later to the early Verdi; to enjoy Mascagni, Leoncavallo, and Puccini rather more than the eternal round of Bellini, Donizetti, and Rossini; to admire the Russian operas of Moussorgsky and Rimsky-Korsakov; to place Debussy and Charpentier on a level with the best of Gounod, Massenet, Bizet and Saint-Saëns. But the supreme question, to my mind, is the same that occurs to me when I enter the National Gallery or any other choice collection of great masters—*Why not love and*

enjoy what is beautiful in them all? It matters not one jot that they represent different or even opposing schools, that they do not resemble each other in detail and execution or even in many of their underlying art principles. Good heavens! how monotonous and wearisome pictures and plays would be without the joy of contrast and infinite variety. Then, by the same rule, why decry and belittle a master like Meyerbeer, and strive to ostracise his superb music-dramas, and shed crocodile tears over the pretended "tragedy" of his refusal to compose tunes and harmonies to a recognized pattern, in obedience to arbitrary ethical laws and in accordance with certain narrow individual views?

There are of course, a few juvenile operas by Meyerbeer, that have never been seen or heard in this country, and never will be. Those are the works that excited the anger of his fellow-student, Weber; they did not deserve to succeed. But it is unfair to confound them with the *chefs-d'œuvre* that came later, after he had taken up his residence in Paris and found his ideal librettist in Eugène Scribe. In these, as one of his biographers has said, "we see that to the flowing melody of the Italians and the solid harmony of the Germans, he united the pathetic declamation and the varied, piquant rhythm of the French. Never before had such operas been seen upon the stage, and their popularity during a period of forty years was simply enormous." The finest of them I have always thought to be *Les Huguenots*—"the most vivid chapter of French history ever written . . . depicted and endued with life and reality, while the whole is conceived and carried out on a scale of magnificence hitherto unknown in opera." I was candidly gratified, therefore, to read in recent numbers of *The Musical Times* and *Musical Standard* a letter from Mr Algernon Ashton concerning the neglect of Meyerbeer's masterpiece. He said, "Why this world-famous opera, one of the most glorious ever written, has of late years fallen into disfavour, is an absolute mystery to me. I know that Meyerbeer's detractors, in their stupid ignorance, are never tired of maintaining that this illustrious composer sacrificed his magnificent abilities for the sake of 'effect.' As if Wagner, and indeed every other opera composer, did not always strive after 'effect'! It was Berlioz who said that there was material for ten operas in Meyerbeer's *Huguenots*, and, considering the endless wealth of delightful melodies which this work contains, the great French composer was not far wrong."

A revival not only of this but of the whole series, not omitting *Robert le Diable*, *Dinorah*, and *L'Etoile du Nord*, would be a source of genuine pleasure to thousands of opera-goers; but I doubt whether these are times in which to expect such an enterprise. It might, nevertheless, be worth while for Colonel Blois—if the plans of the London Opera

Syndicaté should materialise—to consider the advisability of re-mounting *Les Huguenots* at Covent Garden next season. If a strong cast—a “star cast” it was invariably called—could be got together once more, I am quite convinced that we should find this opera drawing overflowing audiences just as it used in the old days. The great thing is to give it really well. There are seven principal parts of about equal prominence, each requiring an artist of the first order, besides three or four minor rôles that require to be competently rendered. Then extra rehearsals would be essential, because the *Huguenots* is no longer in the current repertory sufficiently to be familiar to a company drawn from various theatres. Allowing that the solo work and the duets for Valentine with Marcel and Raoul may be safe, there are still the great ensembles—the scene where the Catholic and Huguenot noblemen take the oath and the “Bénédiction des Poignards”—requiring especial care, apart from the items in the *Pré aux Clercs* scene, such as the “Rataplan” chorus, the ballet of the gipsies, the duel septet, and the grand entry of Queen Marguerite de Valois (on horseback) to honour the espousals of Raoul de Mangis and Valentine, daughter of the Comte de St. Bris. These are all scenes and incidents demanding elaborate stage as well as musical preparation; moreover, they repay all the trouble that can be lavished upon them. The orchestration is far from easy, and it is replete with solo touches for the various instruments of the kind that Meyerbeer was especially fond of, and which exhibit with peculiar felicity and force his inventive genius in this direction. They are quaint, bold, and ingenious, and for fresh listeners they have all the charm of the unexpected.

Before dealing with the collection of records from Meyerbeer's operas, which has so far come into my hands (it is not yet nearly complete), I should like to devote the remainder of this preliminary article to mention some of the famous singers whom I heard in the great rôles with which they were associated. At that time they sang here in no other language but Italian, and, although the original libretti were French, I cannot recall hearing any of Meyerbeer's works so sung except in France or Belgium—certainly never in London. The features of the performance of *Robert le Diable* (referred to above), which have most dwelt in my memory, were the exquisite voice of Christine Nilsson in the tuneful aria *Quando lascio la Normandia*, and Ilma di Murska's brilliant rendering of the then-hackneyed *Roberto, tu che adoro*. Both were unforgettable; while no less impressive, to my mind, was the ghastly scene in the cloisters where, at the demon's invocation, the nuns arise from their graves, youthful once more, and execute a fascinating ballet.

It was three or four years later (1875) that I heard *Les Huguenots* for the first time at Her Majesty's

Theatre in the Haymarket. Apart from the joy of it, I have good cause to remember the event from the fact that the ticket was sent to me by no less a person than the great Tietjens herself, this being two years before the memorable occasion (October, 1877) when I attended her funeral at Kensal Green Cemetery. She acted Valentine in a vein of high tragedy, and her noble voice sounded sublime in the love duet of the fourth act, where she was worthily partnered by the silvery-toned Fancelli. Then, too, I heard the glorious tones of Trebelli-Bettini for the first time in opera as the page, and got an idea of the real charm of the air, “Nobil signor,” when sung by an irresistible artist. In the other parts I was to hear better singers at Her Majesty's later on. For example, Marie Marimon as the Queen, Rota as St. Bris, Del Puente as De Nevers, and Foli as Marcel; or at Covent Garden Bianca Bianchi, Bagagiolo, Cotogni, Graziani, or Maurel, with the superb contralto, Scalchi, as the page, Nicolini or Gayarre as Raoul, and just once, for her annual “benefit,” Adelina Patti as Valentine. It was not one of the *diva's* greatest rôles; it was rather too heavy for her; but, marvellous to relate, she had sung it when a girl of seventeen at New Orleans, and had its traditions at her finger-ends, and she sang the music magnificently.

The Meyerbeer heroines wherein Patti was unapproachable were Dinorah and Caterina (in *L'Etoile du Nord*), parts in which she drew packed houses to Covent Garden scores and scores of times. In the former she was simply delicious—her *Shadow Song* was a dream. In the Russian opera, especially with the illustrious Faure for her Peter the Great, she won every heart in every scene; first in the touching farewell, *Vegli dal ciel* (a truly sublime melody, sung when she bids good-bye to home); then with the pathetic cry that awakens the drunken Czar out of his stupor; and lastly, with the brilliant air with two flutes in the final act, where Caterina recovers her lost wits. But *Dinorah* particularly owed a great debt to the amazing art and captivating personality of Patti; for, as the distinguished critic Eduard Hanslick truly declared, she was the first and almost the only singer to reveal the full beauty of the music sung by the demented heroine and bring into clear relief the intentions of the composer. Quite otherwise was it with her attempt in later days (1879 to be exact) to rival the picturesque and gifted Pauline Lucca as Selika in *L'Africaine*. Here we had a classical illustration—*Carmen* afforded just such another—of the fact that even the greatest prima donna cannot succeed entirely in parts for which she is not fitted by temperament or disposition. Patti could sing any music that was ever written, from Handel down to Gounod, but she could not realise an impulsive, passionate, half-savage creature like the African queen, whereas the fascinating Pauline Lucca could

actually make her live for us in the flesh. As Selika she was absolutely irresistible. Wonderful men, too, have I heard in this opera—as Vasco di Gama, the Frenchmen Naudin and Nicolini, the Spaniard Gayarre, and Jean de Reszke; as Nelusko the incomparable Lassalle, Maurel, Faure, and Graziani; as Don Pedro that fine basso, Bagagiolo.

At Covent Garden *L'Africaine*, like *Les Huguenots*, was constantly given for twenty years (1865–1885); but during the same period, for reasons hard to explain, *Le Prophète* was allowed to lie upon the shelf, despite its uninterrupted popularity in Paris. Ultimately in 1890 it was revived by Harris for Jean de Reszke, who had long before won great success in the title-rôle in Paris, and now sang and acted it here with a nobility and charm that reminded *habitués* of the celebrated Mario in the part. It was a *reprise* to be remembered—admirably mounted, splendidly sung. Together with Jean de Reszke there was his brother Edouard as one of the three Anabaptists, Mme. Richard as the Fidès, and

Mlle. Nuovina as the Berthè, and, by the way, now I come to think of it, I fancy *Le Prophète* on this occasion was sung in French. Five years later it was given here for the last time with Tamagno the Robust as Jean de Leyden and Giulia Ravogli as Fidès, and that, too, was an excellent performance. All this time, of course, *Les Huguenots* was regularly done every season at least twice, and sometimes more frequently, being kept in the active repertory until 1912, when it was given four times with a cast that included Destinn, Tetrazzini, Donalds, Paul Franz, Marcoux, and Sammarco.

So much for Meyerbeer in the past. For the moment he is certainly under a cloud; but it is my firm belief that his day will come again, and that, perhaps, ere very long. Treasures such as he left to the world cannot remain buried and hidden for ever, no matter how loudly the highbrows may scream; and next month I shall begin my task of bringing the best of the record-specimens to light again.

HERMAN KLEIN.



PERSONS AND PERSONALITIES

(Continued)

By SYDNEY GREW

VIII.—William Michael Balfe

THE delightful essay on Bellini, written by "F sharp" for the June number of THE GRAMOPHONE (this author's identity being revealed to us by the Editor on page 2 of that number), turned my mind to Balfe, Bellini's British contemporary, and our equivalent of Bellini, Donizetti, and Rossini. I thereupon determined to write of him, and read the two Balfe biographies which had stood untouched on my shelves ever since I bought them—Charles Lamb Kenney's "Memoir," of 1875, and William Alexander Barrett's "Balfe: His Life and Work," of 1883—and I traced the Balfian matter embodied in the various books of reminiscences by, or about, the eminent musicians of his period: Chorley's, Moscheles' and the like; furthermore, I looked up contemporary accounts of Balfe in various periodicals which I have belonging to the middle of the nineteenth century, and at once Balfe, the other composers of the time, and the innumerable singers, came to life again. No dust of ages remained on *The Bohemian Girl* when I read in Chappell's advertisement in *The Dramatic and Musical Review* for December 23rd, 1843 that of this new opera, "now performing with immense success at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane," "the following six pieces are nightly encored":

I dreamt that I dwelt in marble halls; The Dream,
Sung by Miss Rainforth.

Then you'll remember me; or, When other lips,
Sung by Mr. Harrison.

The heart bow'd down, Sung by Signor Borroni.

The fair land of Poland, Sung by Mr. Harrison.

Come with the Gipsy Bride, Sung by Miss Rainforth.

The Gipsy Chorus.

The famous piece had been first performed on November 27th. Balfe had sold the music to Chappell's for £400, the publishers giving Bunn, the librettist, a further £100 for the words. Already the critics had determined that the *Gipsy Girl's Song* would alone make a fortune for the owners of the music; and in addition to the solos mentioned above, Chappell's had published three books of "favourite airs" for the pianoforte, the overture, a waltz and galop, two sets of quadrilles, a pot-pourri for piano duet, and "various other arrangements" by Moscheles, Benedict, W. H. Calcott, etc.

No dust remained, for the simple reason that these songs live in one's mind to-day with such a curious vitality, that they have but to be named to spring up almost with the freshness of a flower. It was only by the surrounding advertisements that I could realise how all this dates back eighty years;

as by Madame Tussaud's, which informed me that she was showing one of Napoleon's teeth, the Instrument that drew it, a Counterpane stained with his blood, and other relics of the Emperor which, I suppose, were destroyed in the fire a few months back.

Balfe (1808-1870) has had many competitors in the business of providing songs that shall run the whole world over and affect all men alike, provided the latter can be simple and natural at certain times. Some of these competitors are one-success composers: Mrs. Norton with her *Juanita*, Crouch with his *Kathleen Mavourneen*, S. Nelson with his *Mary of Argyle*, and that military gentleman who produced *Isle of Beauty* ("Shades of evening, Close not o'er us, Leave our lonely bark awhile," the text begins). Others of them managed to effect several successes, as Vincent Wallace with his *In Happy Moments* and *Scenes that are Brightest*. But Balfe effected a hundred to each of their one's, and this without ever attempting a prodigious output, like his contemporary John Francis Barnett, who wrote enough songs to afford a fresh piece every week for sixty years. Moreover, there is literally nothing in existence—not even such pieces as the *Ombra mai fui* (the *Largo in G*) of Handel—so thoroughly universal as the Balfe songs noted in the above advertisement, and such further songs as *Come into the Garden, Maud*; *In this old chair my father sat*; and *Killarney*.

It is not our hearing the songs first from the mouth of a great singer that gives them their abiding power. On the contrary, I doubt but that most of us heard them first by aid of our own fingers and Hemy's Pianoforte Tutor, or sung by an aunt or uncle at a Christmas party, which is how *Robin Adair*, *Within a mile of Edinboro' town*, and *Comin' thro' the Rye* are first brought to our consciousness. It may be that we never hear such songs from a great singer—we of this very different generation; and even when they were given far and wide by such singers as Sims Reeves, the actual hearers would not be 1 per cent. of the millions who knew and loved them.

The problem is no profound one. Songs of this kind are in contact with the sheerly elemental in us. They are expressions of a poetic situation regarding which there is no doubt. The words may be poverty-stricken and the music may have no originality. The tune of *Marble halls* echoes some trite Spanish melody, and Mr. Bunn, in *When other lips*, makes reference to hollow hearts that wear a mask. The musical "science" in the tunes of Bellini and Balfe is of the lowest order, so that a musician, reading the actual printed score, has to smile at them. But the native, elemental heart's blood of poetry is in the pieces; so that even Balfe's *Excelsior*, sung by a

bass of brief stature and a long reedy tenor at a parish room concert, goes right home—except in the case of persons whose hollow hearts are artificially masked and deliberately closed to such influences. As a superior musical critic, I have to express astonishment that composers like Mozart can find lovely music for poor words, and I have to ridicule the fame of a Balfe or a Bellini, as did my grandparents in criticism when those musicians were alive (the critics never praised Balfe until late in his life, when he was producing operas that never caught on with the mass of the people, and then they began to laud him). But as a simple, unstudied lover of music, who cherishes that authentic thrill of the genuine poetical situation which makes Hullah's *Three Fishers* a thing of beauty in the Keatsian sense, I have no astonishment and can employ no ridicule. How exquisitely these things and the impressions deriving from them persist! One winter night, in 1892, I was going home from a night school, and I heard a street singer, who for certain reasons, miserable though he was, tried to let no one get a back view of his clothing, sing the then popular song called *The Song that reached my heart* ("I sat midst a mighty throng, Within a palace grand"), and I declare that even to-day I would not yield that experience for later experiences of the *Choral Symphony* of Beethoven or Bach's *Mass in B minor*—at least, I think I would not. The street singer had a clear, high voice. He sang without accompaniment; but from another street near by came the chorus of *Ta ra ra Boom de ay* and the sounds of a concertina, all blending in natural counterpoint.

Balfe was a fortunate man all his life. When fifteen or sixteen years old, he was adopted by a wealthy Italian and taken to Italy. Early in his thirties he was asked to write an opera for Paris, being the first British composer to be thus distinguished. Almost his first "tune" went over Europe to the title of *Balfe's air*, so that when he, a man not more than forty, visited Vienna, the people there thought he was the son of the "*Balfe à l'air*." He was only thirty-five when he wrote *The Bohemian Girl*, and though, like nearly everyone else, he ruined himself for a while in an attempt to establish "national opera," he always had enough to live on. More importantly, he was a man of such genial sympathies that all loved him, even in the social world, and of such a happy temperament that he was known generally as the "sunny Balfe." Towards the end of his life he occupied himself with farming, being one of the many operatic artists who, like sailors, love the quiet stability of trees and fields. [The index to Volume II of THE GRAMOPHONE directs attention to several records containing pieces by Balfe.]

(To be continued.)

GRAMOPHONE CELEBRITIES

XIII.—Eduard Mörike

By W. A. CHISLETT

MÖRIKE (or Moerike), which was a comparatively unknown name in England less than two years ago, has now become almost a household word in gramophone circles.

Herr Eduard Mörike was born in Stuttgart on August 16th, 1878, and comes of old South German stock, being one of the eight sons of a successful merchant and the great-nephew of his namesake the lyric poet. His mother was an enthusiastic lover of music and it was from her that he received his first lessons. When he was ten years of age the family moved to Leipzig, where he attended the High School. Up to the age of sixteen the career that had been mapped out for him was that of medicine, but as at that age he already showed unmistakable talent he was induced by Felix von Weingartner to devote himself to music. He continued his education at the Leipzig High School for some time and then entered the Conservatoire in the same city, where he studied the piano under Adolph Ruthardt, the organ under Homeyer, the violin under Hans Sitt, and composition under Hofmann, the then most renowned teacher in Germany. Originally Ruthardt had planned for him a career as a piano virtuoso, but, following his own inclinations, the youth devoted all the time he could spare to the study of conducting, both orchestral and operatic.

At the age of nineteen he was awarded a Schumann composition prize for a piano concerto in A minor, and shortly after this became a private pupil of Silotti. The call of the theatre was still strong, however, and, on the opportunity occurring, he accompanied Ernst Kraus, the singer, on a visit to America, where he was engaged as a soloist at the Metropolitan Opera House, New York, under the direction of Walter Damrosch.

After a period in America the student returned to Germany more strongly attracted to the theatre than ever, and soon secured an engagement as second conductor at the Stadt Theatre Rostock, and later, at the early age of twenty-four, was appointed chief conductor at Kiel. While holding the latter appointment, in 1906, he was honoured by being called to assist in the great celebrations at Bayreuth. His next permanent post was at Halle/Saale, where in addition to the opera he took over the direction of the symphony concerts. In the

summer of 1907, while still at Halle, Herr Mörike received a personal invitation from Richard Strauss to conduct the rehearsals of the German operas to be given at the Paris Opera House. This invitation was gladly accepted and the visit to Paris ultimately extended over two months, for, in addition to taking charge of the rehearsals, he was called upon to conduct several performances of *Salome* and other operas during the season. At about this time he also directed the famous Wagner festivals at Halberstadt and at Lauchstadt.

In 1912 Herr Mörike received the appointment of principal conductor of the Deutsches Opernhaus, Berlin, which post he held for twelve years, being responsible mostly for the production of Wagnerian works, including the first performance in Berlin of *Parsifal* on January 1st, 1924. He revisited America in 1922 and again in 1923, on each occasion as the general musical director of the Wagner Opera Company, which toured all the principal towns in Northern America.

Since 1924 he has been the conductor of the Philharmonic Orchestra in Dresden—devoting himself entirely to concert work—and is now also the director of the Dresden Academy of Singing.

Herr Mörike has had a wide experience of conducting music of all schools, but his records of the works of Wagner and Strauss are the most valuable, for though all his interpretations are thoughtful and full of vitality, these, in addition, bear the hallmark of authority, and the Parlophone Company have done us good service by including so many of these works in the records issued.

These records have the virtues and faults common to all Parlophone orchestral records. The tone is full and forward, but inclined at times to be rather rough. Although this is doubtless largely the fault of the recording, it may also be partly due to the fact that the tone of the reeds in continental orchestras frequently is more pungent than that to which we are accustomed, and, I believe, that the brass tone, particularly that of the trumpets, is not quite so refined and suave as that of the best English orchestras. The chief flaw in these records is that in *forte* passages the deeper toned instruments, including the 'cellos and double basses, sound muffled and "woolly." This defect can be overcome partially by the use of suitable needles.

I know of no records which respond more to care in the choice of needles. It is, of course, impossible to lay down any hard-and-fast rules, for not only do the records themselves vary considerably, but machines also differ. I have found that a Columbia medium needle not pushed quite home into a Jewel sound-box with a Nom-y-ka diaphragm an ideal combination for most of these records. Splendid results can be obtained also from doped fibres after the record has been got into good condition by the judicious use of fine steel needles or otherwise; fibres, however, are not a great success until this condition is obtained, as the material of which the records are made wears all needles very rapidly.

In grading these records I have had to adopt a somewhat different system from that used previously by other contributors. Comparisons are apt to be invidious, but when it is appreciated that much of the music recorded by Herr Mörike for the Parlophone Company has also been issued by other companies, they must be made when necessary. Grade I. only includes really first-class records, and it can be assumed safely that any record in this grade is at least as good as, if not better than, any other record issued of the same music quite irrespective of price. Grade II. contains a large proportion of records which would have been in Grade I. but for comparatively slight flaws; the most frequent fault being that occasional indistinctness of tone in heavy passages. Records in this grade are well worth buying, and most of them will bear comparison with similar records issued by other companies, particularly when price is a factor to be considered.

The most successful complete recording is *Ein Heldenleben*, which is a magnificent piece of work. It is not absolutely without a fault throughout, but I am afraid it will be a long time before we get a work scored for such a large orchestra and which occupies ten sides recorded without a single fault.

Les Preludes and *Scheherazade* both contain records which considered individually might be placed in Grade I., but the works as a whole just fail to reach that standard. The last movement in my own favourite bit of *Scheherazade*, and this is really splendid. It is better than the Columbia version, which is not too well recorded in places and which annoys me every time I either see or play it because of the absurd waste of space; why it was ever made to spin out to four sides I cannot conceive, as it can be got on to three easily and, moreover, with equally, if not more, convenient places for the divisions. The first movement of Beethoven's *Sixth Symphony*, considered purely from the recording point of view, is worthy of a place in Grade I., but I have relegated it to Grade II. because of the disfigurement occasioned

by a huge cut. Other records which only just miss being placed higher are *Don Juan* and the *Overture* and *Sailors' Chorus* from *The Flying Dutchman*. In the *Overture* the tympani are heard better than in any record I know, the pitch being easily distinguishable; the horns, however, are overpowering in some places.

The *Ballet Music* from *Aida* is issued twice, but both records seem to be pressed from the same matrix. In No. E.10288 the reverse is occupied by the *Introduction* to the same opera, which is beautifully played and recorded, while in No. E.1055, we find on the reverse the *Vale des Fleurs* from Tchaikovsky's *Casse Noisette Suite*, which is a thoroughly bad record.

I am very sorry to have to relegate Beethoven's *Seventh Symphony* to Grade III., but it is not a good specimen of recording. The best that I can say is that the Columbia records of this symphony would be in the same grade and cost 15s. more! The reason for the lowly positions of the three excerpts from Wagner's *Ring* is the old trouble of muffled tone again, though it is only fair to say that *Siegfried's Funeral March* would have been a candidate for Grade I. had the first side been as good as the second.

GRADE I.

Aida—Introduction (Verdi).
Ein Heldenleben (Strauss).
Lohengrin—Prelude (Wagner).
Parsifal—Introduction and *Good Friday Music* (Wagner).
Rienzi—Overture and *March of the Warriors* (Wagner).
Tannhäuser—Overture (Wagner).
Tannhäuser's Pilgrimage to Rome (Wagner).
Tod und Verklärung (Strauss).

GRADE II.

Aida—Ballet Music (Verdi).
Don Juan (Strauss).
Fingal's Cave Overture (Mendelssohn).
The Flying Dutchman—Overture and *Sailors' Chorus* (Wagner).
The Magic Flute—Overture (Mozart).
The Merry Wives of Windsor—Overture (Nicolai).
The Marriage of Figaro—Overture (Mozart).
The Midsummer Night's Dream—Overture and *Scherzo* (Mendelssohn).
Oberon—Overture (Weber).
Pagliacci—Selection (Leoncavallo).
Les Preludes (Liszt).
Saint Elizabeth—Crusaders' March (Liszt).
Scheherazade (Rimsky-Korsakov).
Siegfried—Forest Murmurs (Wagner).
Slavonic Dances Nos. 6 and 8 (Dvorák).
Symphony No. 6, 1st Movement (Beethoven).
Symphony No. 8 (Unfinished) (Schubert).
Tristan and Isolde—Liebestod (Wagner).

GRADE III.

Götterdämmerung — *Siegfried's Funeral March* (Wagner).

Symphony No. 7 (Beethoven).

Symphony No. 8—Allegretto (Beethoven).

The Valkyrie—Wotan's Farewell and Fire Music (Wagner).

GRADE IV.

Casse Noisette Suite—Valse des Fleurs (Tchaikovsky).

Lohengrin—Introduction to Act III. and Bridal Chorus (Wagner).

The Rhinegold—Entry of the Gods into Valhalla (Wagner).

Many of the Parlophone records are pressed from old German matrices, and as I have a number of

records purchased in Germany before the English company was formed I have been able to compare the two issues. The English records are pressed from a material which gives a better surface, but apart from that I do not think they are quite as good as the German ones. The general impression left after hearing all these records is that though many of them are really excellent many more would have been equally good had a little more care been exercised in both recording and pressing. The general standard has improved considerably during the last few months, and I am hopeful that this improvement will continue and that we shall be given more fine records of the music upon which Herr Mörike is such an acknowledged authority.

W. A. CHISLETT.



THE YOUNG COMPOSER

A true story of an English Composer

By JOSEPH HOLBROOKE

[A Comment on the Present Conditions for Composers in Britain.]

HE expected, as a young composer, that he would be in a happy frame of mind when his first work was accepted by a British conductor for performance. Had he not worked up from the "mill," in many and divers struggles? Had he not written his best with everything against him—poverty, indifference, and teaching music? But he had worked sedulously, and he had at last finished his big poem for full orchestra. How he had dreamt, lived, and suffered for his work!

Yes—it would be a landmark in his career, this poem. The conductor had evidently seen the great things in his score. The world was not so hard. It was worth all the pain and misery he had survived. The band, too—how keen they would be over his elaborate scoring, and the great melody in the final section that he had brought forth in a gush of feeling! He had described it for the strings, richly embroidered. Artists must suffer, of course, but if only a good performance is vouchsafed them, that should heal up a lot of sores. He thought so at this time.

He went to the first rehearsal (there were two), in trepidation. He was in real pain again. Even to hear his work (as he had felt it) was going to make him suffer, but he would rather have died than avoid it.

Strange it was—the band was obviously indifferent—and the conductor (horrors!) in a hurry. Long

before the great melody he longed to hear, it was seen that the orchestra were eagerly stampeding. Was his music totally unintelligible to them? Did they feel nothing? The conductor turned to him, and the secret was made clear. It was one o'clock. The players must have smelt the lunch hour. The next rehearsal would "see it through" he said. "Rather difficult your work, the wind especially; but we shall get it done," he said cheerfully.

The composer, of course, should have been grateful for his cheerfulness. He did see his work done, after a fashion, and the work was received with a warm welcome by a very large audience. The composer, of course, bowed many acknowledgments, and he looked forward confidently now to a life of great work and fame. Such a start was indeed imposing and comforting.

He awaited the second performance of his work with eagerness. The roughness of the playing and the manifest efforts of all the players to read his notes alone warranted a far better ensemble, and a clearer understanding by all of his work.

The concerts which included his work, were "popular" and ran to some months of continuous evening concerts, so there seemed no reason for his work to die, or be forgotten.

But he was astounded by a bulky parcel reaching him two days after the first performance, while the praise was still in his ears. Score and parts were

enclosed with the conductor's congratulations. He could not credit such a happening, and imagined he had in some way offended the conductor. After copying all the parts, too! He wrote asking why the score, etc., had been returned to him, and when the second performance of the work could be given. He pointed out the term "great" and "master-piece" used on the work by nearly all the critics. The conductor replied that he could not possibly give it again that year, but hoped he would bring him another work for next season.

This was a blow, indeed. How did he know whether he *could* write another work as fine in such a time? He begged the conductor to give his work another chance without delay. But it was the same reply, only a certain acerbity was added to the wording. How did he know, if he tried again, his work would have such another reception?

Pondering deeply on this tragic aspect (for him) of his shattered hopes, he settled to his dull teaching for his bread, with a very heavy heart. He might, of course, send his score to another conductor. He decided he would. He sent it with a letter and the information of its first success. The publishers, never asleep, had actually written to him asking him to send them the work, and asked him when it would be played again. They could not entertain publication on one performance, they said.

The second conductor's reply was far from encouraging. He pointed out that, as the work had already been played, the chief attraction of it had departed, as "the critics would not write on it a second time"! This absurd aspect of the question had not occurred to him. He had not dreamt of it. He decided that there was no chance here, and started on his next score, hoping for a wider field. Youth is ever optimistic.

About this time he received a letter from the provinces from a foreign conductor, asking to see his score. He was immediately elated, so vain are artists, and he sent it. It was accepted for performance. He decided to go and hear it, unknown to the conductor, and, if he could, quietly to enjoy his own work. As he sat in the audience, unknown, waiting for his work (it was put down last on the programme), he endured again the same tortures that he had endured on the first performance. Lack of food and late hours at his work no doubt contributed to his state of health, which would be well described, no doubt, by the appellation, neurotic.

The work started; the conductor had a "flair" of his own, and he seemed very popular with his audience. The *tempo* was perfect, and this was no small tribute to the gifts of the conductor. The composer marvelled at the clarity of the playing in intricate passages. It had been well rehearsed obviously. As he was having the happiness of all great artists, listening to his own work, a weird and terrible feeling, however, seized on the creator of

the music as it proceeded. What had happened to lacerate his soul like this? It could *not* be possible! How he suffered! It was beyond doubt, however. From the end of his first section to the beginning of the last, the music had been *cut* clean out by the conductor. Not a note of the middle and his most beautiful episode was being played! The humiliation of it was beyond words. Rising before the end of it, the composer precipitately departed. Another of his ideals rudely shattered. He looked for some confusion on the part of the orchestra as he went. He saw none. They seemed very well satisfied with themselves! The conductor was bowing profusely to the plaudits of those who knew nothing of the composer's music.

It was possible, of course, he reasoned, such applause would not have been if *all* of the work had been played! He was cynical enough for this thought already. Ideals soon burn out in the artistic professions.

The parts and score were returned with much praise from the conductor, and no word was said about the disgraceful "cutting" of his score. He decided after consideration, to ask why this had been done without his sanction. He knew it was a very unwise proceeding, as it meant that he would have no further work performed by that same conductor. (He had once, in his pain, written to complain of a newspaper critic, and it had resulted in his work being attacked in a virulent manner by the writer on that paper ever since.) But he received a soft answer. It appeared that the programme was found to be too long, and the only way to have rehearsed the Ravel work, which was also played, was to make the programme shorter. His work seemed the easiest to cut and he (the conductor) regretted it very much, and promised that this should not happen again. Unfortunately, the conductor was an alien, and it did happen again the next year, in another work.

About this time, the young composer, still with some faint ideals floating in his brain and cosmos, received many requests for his works, but none of them offered to buy any of it. They all wanted, most urgently, to borrow them. No doubt, a performance was worth lending your work for, in your early stages, but he had, as I have said, some ideals of his own. And lending his work, probably for a refusal or an excuse, was entirely against his tenets or inclination. He refused in every case, as he saw no kind of serious appreciation of his music apparent, only an intense curiosity to get his views in interviews, or probably to see what his music was really like, or to get the "first performance."

He stood with nothing worthy of him in publication. Only small popular efforts had he in print, and these did not represent him (in his own estimation) one little bit.

To his intense joy, an enquiry came along for a Festival work. Had he a work about twenty minutes in length for a performance? was the question. He had not, but he had nearly finished a new work, and he succeeded in getting this accepted. The difficulty confronting him was one of expense, as the emolument mentioned by the Festival authorities for the new work was ten guineas, and no help was mentioned for publication or the parts. The latter was always a difficulty for him. No publisher leapt forward to put his large works in print, and he had always to write his own parts. This he did, and (according to the unfortunate players who had to read them) very badly indeed! He found it a heart-breaking task copying his parts, unable to afford a copyist.

After some frantic efforts with various wealthy British publishers, a German firm offered to issue the work for him on a royalty, *after so many hundred* copies were sold. Incidentally, they had to do the parts for it also. With their large organisation, this was not a difficult task. Not a penny would come to him for some time for his work, it was evident.

He had to travel to the town to rehearse it, and also see to his clothes for the occasion. Well, it was worth it. He only worked for music, and he knew that all the composers had had to face these situations, and worse, before him.

He had the place of honour in the programme, but this was counteracted by the orchestra's lack in many instruments that he had included in his score. The band had "the usual complement," he was told, and never had such instruments as he wanted. This meant a loss to his colour in scoring, but beggars cannot be choosers. The Festival was conducted by a well-known knight in music, who looked with anything but favour on the music this composer wrote. He noticed that there was no welcome for him, and the orchestra was distinctly and (he thought) brutally amused by his efforts at conducting. So much so, that he found players in the orchestra cracking jokes when they should have been playing! This so annoyed him that he stopped the band (composed of nothing but famous players) and castigated them in no uncertain fashion.

There was an uproar at this. Who had ever had such absurd music to read? It was impossible, said one player and another; the parts too, were incorrect, etc. It needed the combined efforts of several to quell the turbid rancour which he had brought to the surface. After all, "new music" is not so welcome as all that! He pointed out to the aggrieved clarinet player after the rehearsal, that to tell him at a full rehearsal any passage was "quite impossible" was not quite kind to him. He suggested that he could have well told him after the rehearsal.

Quite exhausted with his efforts, as he ate his lunch—sausages and mashed too (a nice diet for a composer of neurotic music!)—he ruminated on the colossal difficulties confronting him and his work. He was grateful indeed to get his notes. This seemed quite a feat in itself. Did music always pursue the same road, the same cadences, the same harmony? He could not fathom the obvious dislike of his score by the musicians. Indeed, he had found musicians his greatest opponents!

The work was, however, again well received by the large public, and he could point to much praise from a large press. A further shock awaited him, however, in the form of an interview with the gentleman who had asked originally for his work. It appeared the committee had received information that he had advertised on his notepaper many notices of his work of high praise. He asked the composer to refute this story. The name of the informant he could not obtain, but he was able to explain the matter satisfactorily.

The ugly incident indented itself on his mind so much that he had a further interview with the friend who asked him, and found that the information had secretly come to the committee from the conductor himself, the knight of musical honours. Ideals were disappearing with a vengeance. What was in store for him and his music? he wondered. He did not evidently belong to the sacred circle from the universities or the colleges; little circles evidently, where back scratching was a regular performance. He could not refrain from telling the conductor his opinion of him, which no doubt promptly closed other doors for his work. The starvation diet of music was a severe one. It was not unlike the poet's fate. Music was its own reward evidently, more so than in the days of Beethoven, for these "adventures" were certainly shattering in their effects.

Finding it impossible to carry on any further with nameless and ungifted pupils, and unrewarded for his work, he took a post as pianist on a provincial tour and seized his opportunities where he could for his next work, while working among the lowest of theatrical acrobats.

Was England really as unmusical as this? he thought. He wrote some light piano music and lighter songs, which were quickly accepted, and which would damn his reputation, if he ever had any. He must descend to the depths. After all, what chance had a composer without a private income, and without the instinct of sycophancy? He dreamt next of giving a concert or two of his work; he had committed a Quartet and a Quintet. He would then have some music played as he wanted it. It was worth another effort.

JOSEPH HOLBROOKE.

(To be continued.)

THE BEETHOVEN SYMPHONIES

By THE EDITOR

WHEN, in the early spring of 1923, I was meditating the publication of this paper, there were available of the Beethoven symphonies the Berlin Philharmonic version of the *Fifth* and a plum-coloured excerpt from the *Sixth* in the H.M.V. list, and a shortened version of the *Third*, produced by Columbia as one of the first landmarks in the transition of their recording. I suppose there would have been some Polydors in those days, but they were not easily acquired, while any Parlophones that already existed were then known as Polyphons, and as difficult to extricate from Germany as Polydors. As I write this article in the early autumn of 1925 there are two versions of the *First*, one of the *Second*, three of the *Third*, two of the *Fourth*, four of the *Fifth*, two of the *Sixth*, four of the *Seventh*, two of the *Eighth*, and three of the *Ninth*—twenty-three in all. Reasonably enough, many of our readers want to know what is the best version of each symphony. Well, I can do no more than indicate my own preferences, but I do beg that nobody will ascribe to my utterances an *ex cathedra* infallibility to which they do not aspire. The best I can promise is that I will not be Sibylline, but try to express my votes clearly and definitely. The other night, thinking over what I was going to say in this article, I asked myself if I could award a symphony to each of the nine muses. Terpsichore, the Muse of Dancing? She should have the *Seventh*. That was an easy choice. Nor would anyone quarrel with giving the *Third* to Melpomene, the Muse of Tragedy. The *Fifth* might be granted to Calliope, the Muse of Epic Verse, and the *Fourth* to Erato, the Muse of Erotic Verse. The *Sixth* I gave at first to Euterpe, the Muse of Lyric Verse, reserving the *Eighth* for Thalia, the Muse of Comedy. But then I remembered that Thalia was also the Muse of Bucolic Verse and was often represented in art with a shepherd's crook. So she must have the *Pastoral Symphony* and her lyric sister the *Eighth*. The *Ninth* seemed plainly marked for Polyhymnia, the Muse of Sacred Song. By straining things a bit I could just perceive a certain relation between Clio, the Muse of History, and the *First Symphony*; but there the appropriate awards come to an end, for by no argument could I establish any relation between Urania, the Muse of Astronomy, and the *Second Symphony*. As a matter of fact astronomy has long ceased to have anything to do with the Arts, and so I shall make Urania the Muse of Novels, in which case her patronage of the *Second Symphony* would be not inappropriate.

I understand that the whole of the *First Symphony*

is to be found in the latest Polydor list; but I only have the first movement played by the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra and conducted by Hermann Abendroth. In that movement I found the Parlophone version conducted by Weissmann just as effective and I don't think that anybody should pay 5s. 9d. a record for what need cost only 4s. 6d. The Parlophone set is good enough. If any enthusiast with a few shillings to spare wishes to supplement his *First Symphony* I strongly recommend the Toscanini record of the Finale. This has on the other side a delightful *gagliarda* of Paisello, and both are played triumphantly. The conventional remark to make about the *First Symphony* is that it is like Haydn. For the first time of playing that may be so. Luckily the gramophone is curing us of these superficial judgments which were often due to our infrequent opportunities of hearing certain works. When one has played through this symphony half-a-dozen times one begins to comprehend how much of the authentic Beethoven is hidden in its texture. The *Minuet* of the third movement which, because it is labelled minuet, naturally makes us regard it at first as a traditional affair is far more like one of Beethoven's own scherzos than a Haydn minuet. Dancing to such a minuet would have split the seat of every pair of breeches in the ballroom. And Haydn never began any of his symphonies with those strange rumblings which to me are like warnings of that mighty human thunderstorm which Beethoven was. They might come from one of his dramatic overtures. I find it significant that Beethoven chose the key of C major for his first symphony, whereas Mozart chose that key for his last.

Of the *Second Symphony in D flat* we have only the Parlophone issue, which is well recorded throughout. This symphony is full of melodic incident. By contemporary critics it was not considered an advance upon the *First*. Nowadays the general opinion is that it marks a great advance. I don't feel that I know it well enough yet to say much about it; but it has the effect on me of a good novel which I finish with the expectation of re-reading and enjoying even more the next time I read it. The melodies are very potent, and the one in the first movement persisted in my head right through the *First Symphony* which I played for the third time after playing both the *First* and the *Second* twice in one evening.

The *Third Symphony* is too well known to require my comments on it in this guide-book article. There it is like Mount Everest, and there it will be

till the crack of doom. But which of the three versions am I to recommend? I think if the Columbia conducted by Sir Henry Wood were not so hopelessly cut I should vote for it as the best recording, though let me hasten to add not for every machine. I never thought much of it as recording until I played it on my Balmain. It requires all the "openness" that it can be given. I consider that it is unquestionably Sir Henry's best effort for the gramophone, where on the whole, to my mind, he has been a sad disappointment. As between the Polydor and the Parlophone versions I am going to give a firm vote for the Parlophone in spite of one or two rough moments, and I definitely prefer Weissmann's interpretation to Oscar Fried's. At the same time I do not think that we shall have a really supreme Eroica until Koussevitsky conducts it for the gramophone. All the three versions we possess are really journeymen productions.

Schumann said that the *Fourth Symphony* was like a slender Greek maiden between two Norse giants. The passion and the tenderness of this exquisite music may have led to its being called for a time the *Love Symphony*. It has the same kind of wistful beauty that Beethoven expressed more obviously in the *Spring Sonata*. I prefer the Polydor version conducted by Dr. Hans Pfitzer to the Parlophone, but it is not 1s. 3d. a record better if one may dare to reduce the magic of youthful passion to miserable coppers, and the Parlophone version is good enough for anybody.

Now I come to the most difficult decision of all. Which version of the *Fifth* are you to buy? Let us look at it first from a financial point of view. The two H.M.V.'s will cost you 26s. each, the Columbia will cost you 26s. (with album), the Parlophone will cost you 21s. (with album), and the Polydor will cost you 23s. As an interpretation of the sublime *Fifth* I have no hesitation in recommending the old Berlin Philharmonic version conducted by Nikisch, which has been promoted (or relegated) to the Museum catalogue of H.M.V. But it is an old and imperfect recording, and I have no doubt that the majority of my readers will not thank me for the recommendation. I have no doubt whatever that the majority will prefer the Columbia version to any of the others, though I've not yet received the Polydor version, about which I shall have to write a note next month in my article on the Polydor records. The Columbia "bridge" from the *scherzo* to the *finale* is certainly the best we have. The Parlophone makes a sad hash of this. There are one or two superlatively good moments in the Columbia *andante*, but the *finale* is poor. Once more I must insist on the supreme excellence of the Toscanini *finale*, which is, alas, all we have of his interpretation. The Parlophone is a sound recording, but after this second severe test I am inclined to prefer Columbia, and on the whole, without much

enthusiasm, I shall recommend the Columbia version above all the others.

Between the Polydor and the Parlophone *Sixth* there is not a pin to choose, and that being the case I shall take price as the acid test and recommend the Parlophone version without a qualm. While I was playing these records over the other evening I kept fancying that I could detect a fragment of that lovely melody in the slow movement of the *Violin Concerto*. I have never read anywhere that this melody was used in the *Pastoral Symphony*. I wonder if any of our readers has heard this echo, or if it is merely an aural delusion of mine.

The mutilated version of the *Seventh Symphony* conducted by Albert Coates was, so far as it went, the best in my opinion; but like Sir Henry Wood's *Third*, it was really too much mutilated to recommend. And now everybody will suspect me of trying to hedge when I say that after all I believe the Columbia *Seventh* is the best! If I do say so, Columbia must thank Mr. Balmain, not me. Mind you, I cannot feel absolutely positive, because the strain of playing all these symphonies for purposes of comparison has been really very heavy, and it may be that the sudden "freshness" of the Columbia after what had been a day of Polydors and Parlophones is the cause of my apparent *volte-face*. At the same time I must commend the superb conducting of Moerike in the last two movements of the Parlophone version, and if any reader has bought a Parlophone set in preference to a Columbia on my advice he need not worry, for on most machines it will certainly be the best. I thought the Polydor *Seventh* very good when I first played it, but I was disappointed by it on the second and third trial.

Of the *Eighth Symphony* I am as sure as I ever was that the Columbia version is much better than the Parlophone. This is adorable music. It always seems to me that in this symphony Beethoven went back to his youth for inspiration. There is no return to an earlier manner, but there does seem to me quite definitely a return to an earlier matter, and once more I find it highly significant that it is written in the simple key of F major.

I have no hesitation whatever in recommending the H.M.V. version of the *Ninth Symphony*, in spite of the dreary singing of the choral part. The Parlophone *Ninth* is too rough, and though I hear rumours of certain parts being re-recorded I can only give a verdict on what is before me. On the Balmain the H.M.V. orchestral parts are superb.

I have extracted from a most interesting article by Dr. Mead on Polydor records his remarks about the Beethoven symphonies, which I append as a supplement to my own remarks. You will note that he and I are in full agreement about the Nikisch *Fifth*, and though I think that he is inclined to praise the Polydor records a little too highly, it may easily be that he is right. At the same time,

I fancy that the "freshness" of them has led many of our readers into thinking them better than they are. My own tendency is to think them less good as I play them more often. But to this I must return next month.

"The *First* is recorded by the Berlin Staatsoper Orchestra again, this time under Otto Klemperer (three and a half, d.s.) most delightfully done and a joy to listen to. The same orchestra under Oskar Fried gave us the *Eroica* (six, d.s.). This is another triumph, the flute parts in the *Marcia Funebre* being especially well done. Dr. Hans Pfitzner, a very capable director, guides this body of musicians in a very beautiful rendering of the *Fourth Symphony* (five, d.s.). The *Fifth* is given by the Neues Symphonie Orchester, Berlin, under Bruno Seidler Winkler (four, d.s.); I have not heard it as I still stick to my old Nikisch. This orchestra under Pfitzner produces the *Pastorale* (five and a half, d.s.). It is well done, but I imagine the orchestra is not large. The storm is not nearly so noisy as the one in my pet abomination, *William Tell*. At the same time we must recollect the orchestra of 100 players is a modern invention, and these symphonies were never written for so large a body of men. Is there such a thing as an uncut version of the *Seventh Symphony*? The first production which we had was in three d.s., long since thrown

'into the discard.' The Polydor version is by the Staatsoper under Walter Wohlebe (four, d.s.). The Columbia version in nine records is cut in the *Scherzo*; I have not heard this Polydor version and do not see how they can get the whole symphony into eight records. Why the Columbia Company did not make a complete record of this symphony, instead of publishing on the odd side a Weingartner record which no one wants or plays, is one of those things which passes comprehension. The Polydor *Eighth* is incomplete as far as my lists have it, omitting the *Allegretto* and part of the *Scherzo*. The Polydor *Ninth* is only wanted to fill in two absent sections in the Parlophone version of that symphony. It very acceptably supplies the missing opening to the fourth movement, and a small section of orchestrated work in the same. This the Parlophone recorders in their great wisdom omitted.

"I have been asked what issues of Beethoven's symphonies I would recommend. I would reply as follows: *First*, Polydor; *Second*, Parlophone, the only version published to date; *Third* and *Fourth*, Polydor; *Fifth*, I do not know, there are many to choose from; *Sixth*, Polydor (but I have not heard the Parlophone); *Seventh*, Columbia with Weingartner, although Mr. Mackenzie says he prefers the Parlophone, I believe; *Eighth*, the same; *Ninth*, Parlophone plus Polydor, as above."



THE WILSON PROTRACTOR

In view of the number of enquiries which have been made, both at the Congress, and in correspondence upon the method of using the alignment protractor, Mr. Wilson has compiled the following notes for the benefit of our readers. The design for the protractor was printed in our March issue. Protractors mounted on card, ready for use, may be obtained from this office, price 1s.

"The protractor is designed to measure the error of alignment at any point of a record. The needle is placed on one or other of three points, marked X, Y, Z, and the pointer is rotated until the lines drawn on it are parallel to the face of the sound-box. The error of alignment is then read off from a scale.

"It is immaterial which of the three points is used. In fact, the needle could be placed at *any* point on the line which passes through X, Y, and Z. Three points were marked so that the distance between needle-point and spindle could be read off directly from the slot scale and that the protractor could be used on all machines. An

unusually large error could not be measured from one of the points, though it could from another. Similarly, the side of the cabinet will sometimes prevent the use of the point X, though not the point Z.

"By measuring the error with the needle at different distances (from 2 in. by each $\frac{1}{2}$ in. up to 6 in.) from the spindle, it is possible to deduce the fundamental measurements of the tone-arm and sound-box. These cannot be measured directly with sufficient accuracy. From them and from the distance between tone-arm pivot and the centre of the spindle one can determine what alterations are required to correct the alignment. The assembling of machines even of the same model is often so carelessly done as to make it unsafe to say definitely that a certain model requires a certain treatment.

"Were it not for some curious questions which have been put to me, I should have thought it unnecessary to add that the protractor does not of itself *correct* the alignment!"

GRAMOPHONE CONCERTO INTERPRETATIONS

By JOHN F. PORTE

THE important subject of gramophone interpretation policies may be well studied in recorded concertos. Looking at these, the question arises whether the companies decided on a concerto and then got the most suitable soloist, whether they thought certain soloists should choose and record concertos, or whether the first available artiste was approached and the result merely happened. Are both the happy and the unhappy combinations just a matter of luck? The symphony orchestra presents the highest vehicle of musical expression that is available, and to play an important concerto with orchestra is perhaps the highest single performance that a soloist can undertake. There are, of course, concertos that were written solely to show off the soloist, but practically all the famous examples have an orchestral part that is most important and inseparably entwined with the soloist. Perhaps there is little need to tell gramophonists this latter, because they do not buy a concerto to see a popular soloist! Nevertheless, there is always the danger that the more important the soloist the less the concerto is listened to as a whole. We shall all be musically educated when we buy music for its own sake and only think of the performer from the point of view whether he or she is an adequate interpreter. If we then disagree, the sign is but healthy; only the blind acceptance of dictums or traditions or the mere worship of famous names are indications of false musical appreciation.

The form of the concerto has not always been the same, and here we come to a point which I have argued in more than one form and place from a signed article to an unsigned "leader." I prefer to see the matter as an oft recurring theme more than as the personal insistence of a fad. The point crops up at once in Bach. Here we find concertos that are unlike the later form, but the point is that to Bach they *were* concertos; he did not know the "modern" form, even if he guessed it. I see no reason for the saying that a Bach concerto is not really a concerto at all. One might as well say that a mediæval knight was not really a knight at all! Perhaps he was not, when compared with those of later date; but it should be remembered that *he* thought himself quite real, and might possibly have strong opinions could he see the "real" commercial and political knights of modern time.

I wish there were concertos by Tallis, Byrd, or Orlando Gibbons; but these and the others of the glorious company of English Tudor and Elizabethan composers were busy writing unaccompanied vocal part-music that has never been surpassed. Some of it has been recorded (English Singers, H.M.V.).

I shall take each concerto composer in alphabetical, not chronological, order, for we are dealing with the works themselves and not with the history of their form. Composers were also separate human beings, not solely historical stepping-stones. I shall try to show whether the interpretation gives a good idea of each concerto, or where the company might have bettered it.

J. S. BACH (1685-1750).

Bach brings us at once to the appreciation of old music. It is the composer's time and view that we have to consider. If we can get this latter point Bach will appear not merely as a great contrapuntalist, but as a full-blooded human. It may even dawn on us that the early eighteenth century was perhaps not the beginning, but the fading, of a great era. Byrd and Gibbons in England had been dead sixty years before Bach was born.

Brandenburg Concerto in G, for Strings.—This is certainly a concerto that may not seem to justify its title; but look at your miniature score, or at least listen very carefully. You will notice that the English orchestral string-players are proving first-rate soloists, and also that Goossens is a fine conductor. (H.M.V. records.)

Concerto in D minor, for Two Violins and Orchestra.—I think this has been recorded three times: Kreisler and Zimbalist (H.M.V.); D'Aranyi and Fachiri (Vocalion); and Catterall and J. S. Bridge (Columbia). Kreisler and Zimbalist take some beating of course. D'Aranyi and Fachiri, two talented women, are quite safe Bach players. Catterall and J. S. Bridge, with orchestra conducted by Sir Hamilton Harty, are splendid, earnest and sincere interpreters.

Concerto No. 1, in D minor, for Pianoforte and Strings.—Harriet Cohen and Sir Henry J. Wood have recorded this (Columbia), and the interpretation, at least, is first-rate. Harriet Cohen has a high reputation as a Bach player, and has played with Harold Samuel. Sir Henry J. Wood is also

a Bach enthusiast, and his strings are incidentally the best department of his orchestra.

BEETHOVEN (1770-1827).

Concerto No. 5, in E flat ("Emperor"), for Pianoforte and Orchestra.—This has been recorded by Lamond and orchestra conducted by Goossens (H.M.V.). Such a rendering could hardly be bettered.

Concerto in D, for Violin and Orchestra.—Isolde Menges with orchestra conducted by Sir Landon Ronald has recorded this (H.M.V.). The soloist is very good, yet somehow one would ask for a more masculine performance of Beethoven. Catterall could get the required bigness, but he is not an H.M.V. artiste; of this company's black label list I would suggest William Primrose. Sir Landon Ronald's conducting is respectable if not great.

ELGAR (1857).

Still the greatest English composer for the last three hundred years and one of the most individual and personal of living creative musicians. His two fine concertos have both been recorded, although in considerably condensed form.

Concerto in B minor, for Violin and Orchestra.—The existing recording is by Albert Sammons and New Queen's Hall Orchestra conducted by Sir Henry J. Wood (Columbia). Perhaps the greatest compliment is to wish that Sammons would record the concerto again and in a more complete form. He has always played the Elgar violin concerto in a most beautiful manner, and even these old records show his lovely, sympathetic tone. The orchestral part is naturally very important, and the records are fortunately not all solo and no orchestra.

Concerto in E minor, for 'Cello and Orchestra.—Beatrice Harrison has kept this concerto alive in England, and she has recorded it with orchestra conducted by the composer (H.M.V.). Having heard Mme. Suggia play it in public, one wishes that she had been the recording soloist, even though this would have meant celebrity-priced records. Beatrice Harrison always worries me when I have to hear her play, and her Elgar records recall visions of excessive emotionalism.

CÉSAR FRANCK (1822-1890).

Variations Symphoniques, for Pianoforte and Orchestra.—There is nothing wrong with the rendering of Arthur de Greef, a compatriot of the composer, and orchestra finely conducted by Sir Landon Ronald (H.M.V.). It is very beautiful and noble.

GRIEG (1843-1907).

Concerto in A minor, for Pianoforte and Orchestra.—This has been recorded in condensed form by

Arthur de Greef and orchestra conducted by Sir Landon Ronald (H.M.V.). M. de Greef was a friend of the composer and has always been associated with the concerto, and he plays it as an intimate friend. Sir Landon Ronald provides a sympathetic, but not very inspired, orchestral part.

LISZT (1811-1866).

Hungarian Fantasia, for Pianoforte and Orchestra.—Arthur de Greef is very fond of Liszt, and his crisp, finished technique suits this showy and sometimes noisy music. It is only when Paderewski plays a hackneyed Liszt work that we recognise the depth underlying the great Hungarian composer. The *Fantasia*, as played by de Greef and orchestra conducted by Sir Landon Ronald (H.M.V.), is quite as good as we shall usually hear it.

Concerto No. 1, in E flat, for Pianoforte and Orchestra.—The foregoing remarks apply here. The concerto is played by the same artistes for H.M.V.

MENDELSSOHN-BARTHOLDY (1809-1847).

Concerto No. 1, in G minor, for Pianoforte and Orchestra.—Benno Moiseivitch and orchestra conducted by Sir Landon Ronald on H.M.V. records, get the most out of this concerto. The work is brilliant, but shallow, so that it can hardly show any depths that have not been reached by the performers.

Concerto in E minor, for Violin and Orchestra.—This has been recorded by Eddy Brown and orchestra (Parlophone). Mr. Brown is an American violinist, but he does not make this concerto go very far. Mendelssohn was, after all, sometimes capable of considerable warmth of feeling. The slow movement sees Eddy Brown displaced by Edith Lorand.

I wish Daisy Kennedy could be prevailed upon to record this concerto; a recent performance by her showed me that the work has life in it and need not always sound hackneyed.

MOZART (1756-1791).

Concerto No. 4, in D, for Violin and Orchestra.—Kreisler and orchestra conducted by Sir Landon Ronald made this for H.M.V. It is done well, and Kreisler's silvery tone could hardly be bettered for Mozart.

SAINT-SAËNS (1835-1921).

Concerto No. 2, in G minor, for Pianoforte and Orchestra.—Saint-Saëns' most popular pianoforte concerto has been adequately rendered in abridged form by Arthur de Greef and orchestra conducted by Sir Landon Ronald (H.M.V.). The pianist suits this very clear music.

SCHUMANN (1810-1856).

Concerto in A minor, for Pianoforte and Orchestra.—Recorded by Cortôt and orchestra conducted by Sir Landon Ronald for H.M.V. Here, as far as the soloist is concerned, is a case of either mistaken or unlucky interpretation policy; it is more interesting than authoritative. The great French pianist gives a traditional rendering, yet he does himself an injustice by playing the work, and the result is like self-inflicted cruelty. Cortôt is a superb player of crystal-clear thought; his Debussy *Children's Corner* records will show this. German music of the definitely "romantic" style is as clear as mud, so that the interpretation of the Schumann concerto as recorded shows conflict rather than sympathy. Sir Landon Ronald conducts very well indeed, and even manages sometimes to smooth over the conflicting mentalities of composer and soloist. Why not have had Moiseivitch?

Some concertos have been recorded in snippets, but I wonder that nobody has done Lalo's warm-blooded *Symphonie Espagnole* with orchestra. The records with piano by Chemet and Heifetz (all H.M.V.) are very tempting.

There are, of course, extracts from the showy concertos by de Beriot and Wieniawski, as played by various celebrated violinists. Saint-Saëns' *Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso* is really a short concerto for violin and orchestra.

An attractive record is that made by Heifetz with orchestra (H.M.V.) of the slow movements of violin concertos by Tchaikovsky and Goldmark. Everyone knows the former, but the latter is also very welcome. I recently heard from Vienna that Goldmark now has a new and beautiful tombstone to keep his memory green. I sincerely share this respect, for Goldmark was not a profound German romanticist; he simply wrote music that is still warm and human, deeply felt if not deeply shown. He was sincere, as the *Andante* from his violin concerto and the jolly *Rustic Wedding* symphony show. The latter is popular in America, and the *Bridal Song* with the new recording has now reached us on H.M.V. C 1210.

JOHN F. PORTE.

* * *

Dealers Please Note!

From time to time during the last two years we have acknowledged our debt of gratitude to the trade for very real help given to the lengthening and strengthening of the arm of THE GRAMOPHONE. Mutual confidence and co-operation do more than any number of "publicity competitions" to bring new readers in, and we are aware of much unobtrusive good will towards us in the highest circles of the gramophone business. But here, almost by the same post, come two circulars which have been distributed to the clientele of the firms

in question, which are Messrs. Russell Worby and Co., 104-108, Dawes Road, Fulham, London, S.W., and Messrs. Mackay Bros., Ltd., Rissik Street, Johannesburg. The latter begins: "All gramophone enthusiasts and music lovers should become subscribers to this excellent monthly magazine, which has a very large circulation in Great Britain," and includes a list of a "few good articles" from the current number. The former consists of a folio sheet of eulogy such as modesty forbids us to quote at length. Let a few sentences suffice! "... In a word, it is the paper that no gramophone house should be without. It is the best musical paper in the whole world and is read all over the wide world. We, for our part, cannot say more than this, that it is the most instructive paper on gramophone matters and that we are proud to admit that most of our best record stock has been selected solely through the recommendation of THE GRAMOPHONE, especially our stock of His Masters' Voice, Columbia, Vocalion, Parlophone, and Aco records. ... We have every copy of that wonderful musical paper from its first number up to date."

Needless to say, both these circulars are "unsolicited testimonials." But we are quite willing to solicit similar testimonials from every gramophone dealer in the world, because we can guarantee that if THE GRAMOPHONE seems to the trade to be an efficient paper now it will become very much more efficient as time goes on if the increase of the circulation gives us scope to carry out our schemes for improvement. Please proceed with the crusade!

* * *

A Committee of Experts.

A paragraph under the above heading appeared in the November number (Vol. II., p. 224) and announced that a "few real experts" had consented to act as a committee to report upon any gramophones, sound-boxes, tone-arms, etc., submitted to us by the makers. It is true that several reports have been prepared by this committee and valuable criticism has been given confidentially to manufacturers; but since the work has necessarily been only in spare time, it was felt that the wants of our readers have not been adequately supplied, especially of those readers who live far from gramophone shops and who depend for information on advertisements and trade journals. The committee has therefore been increased in size, so that a quorum may easily be obtained to adjudicate upon any gramophone or accessory submitted to this office; and, further, it has been arranged that a methodical programme of reports every month shall be adopted. The work of the committee will be constructive rather than destructive, and calculated to give positive help to the trade and to the public for the general improvement of the gramophone.

ENGLISH FOLK SONGS

By N. O. M. CAMERON

IN the July number there was a query about folk-songs which I am afraid I had not sufficient energy to answer, especially as the answer would necessarily have been very brief. But I was startled at seeing a reply in the August number giving a list of specimen records for the most part made by operatic celebrities. However, I soon realised that I had been thinking only of English folk-songs, whereas the list supplied by J. H. B. was more or less cosmopolitan, and contained only one English record. It therefore seems worth while to put down a few remarks and supply a list of examples.

It would be as well not to allow W. L. A., the original inquirer, to buoy himself up with false hopes. I cannot supply a complete list of all the folk-songs, even of all the English folk-songs that have ever been recorded. One would need first to obtain a list, which does not and cannot exist, of all the folk-songs that have ever been collected, and then to look up every item in every record catalogue. Further, it must be broken to W. L. A. that very few have been recorded. I have sometimes been inclined to think that this is just as well. Singers are trained to put expression into their singing; a folk-song should be sung simply and with complete absence of self-consciousness. The audience should be able to ignore the singer's own personality. The artists who sing for the gramophone may have the greatest difficulty in complying with these demands, especially if they are operatic celebrities. On the other hand, if a folk-song is sung in good taste, perhaps to hear it from the gramophone is an ideal method. Obviously it is very much easier to ignore a singer's personality if he is not present. And if one objected to folk-songs at concerts, one would banish them to the bath-room, the only place where the ordinary person ventures to sing, or more likely to oblivion, since no one would know of them. Of course, in the ideal community every man, woman, and child would sing at any odd moment just for the sake of singing—and without annoyance to their neighbours—as is actually the case in the remote parts

of the Appalachians visited by Cecil Sharp. But self-conscious civilisation has driven this spontaneous flow of melody to its last refuge.

Since a folk-song has been defined as "anything written by nobody and arranged by Cecil Sharp," something should be said about him. He was, as a matter of fact, neither the first nor the only collector of folk-songs. But he was, in the opinion of many, the most successful and the most skilful, and he made the collection of folk-songs and folk-dances his life-work. This matter of publication especially singles him out. To quote Dr. Vaughan

Williams: "Cecil Sharp discovered our national heritage of song and dance, and he determined that it should not remain locked up in libraries or buried in the archives of learned societies, but that what belonged to the people should be restored to the people. I trace the beginnings of the wonderful musical renaissance in England of the last 20 years to the folk-song and dance movement inaugurated by Cecil Sharp."

It follows, then, that if English music is to be properly represented on the gramophone, folk-songs must be included, and again, if folk-songs are to be made known

and popular (in the original sense of the word), it would be folly to ignore the gramophone. Only if folk-songs are to be recorded, let them be sung well and in good taste (as at Caxton Hall on July 9th) or not at all. And may one make a suggestion as to the choice of songs, whether for recording or for concert programmes? It is that the choice should not be confined, as it so often is, to the more plaintive type. To ignore the cheerful and vigorous ones will make the idea of folk-song insipid to the ordinary person, who is liable to imagine that the "folk-song cult" is only for high-brows.

W. L. A. also asks "What music publishers deal with the vocal and pianoforte publications?" The answer is, all publishers, or at any rate a great many. Although Cecil Sharp only published a fraction of his collection, the list* of his works is long and complicated, and it is unfortunately



CECIL SHARP

*Printed in *The E.F.D.S. News*, November, 1924.

impossible to acquire a complete set of the songs collected and arranged by him without considerable overlapping. If desired, I will get information about other collections.

Folk-songs are not only given as found with the addition of an accompaniment, but are often elaborated into part-songs; the English Singers usually include some in their programmes. There are also instrumental compositions derived more or less directly from folk-song melodies, such as Vaughan Williams' *Folk-song Suite for Military Band*, Waldo-Warner's *Fantasy, Dance to your Daddy*, and the piccolo duet, *The Keeper in The Boatswain's Mate*. But for the present it is advisable to draw the line at vocal records.

Edgar Coyle sings quite a large proportion, as things are at present, of the recorded folk-songs on Col. 3347 and 3369. I was once listening to one of them in a shop, and the assistant remarked: "Edgar Coyle is very good on the gramophone; he puts such expression into his singing." In view of what I have said above, this was rather unfortunate! But he does not deserve condemnation. *The Flowers in the Valley* requires a note. I remember, when I was at Winchester, Cecil Sharp lectured to the school with Miss Kay singing illustrations, among them this song. But some years later, in the light of further experience, he decided it was a mistake to consider this a genuine folk-song, and there can hardly be any doubt that his second thoughts were correct.

There was a record (Voc. R.6012) with *Admiral Benbow* on one side and *Bingo* on the other, sung by Frederick Ranalow. It has now been withdrawn. *Admiral Benbow* is rather a failure, and finishes with a conventional rallentando and high note. One would have expected Ranalow to have known better. But *Bingo* is not so bad.

O No, John has been recorded by H.M.V. (which calls it *No, John, No*), E.91, and by Vocalion, R.6081, John Buckley. I have not heard the latter, having possessed the former for years on one of the old-time single-sided H.M.V. It is very nicely sung by Charles Tree. I also have a single-sided H.M.V. record of *Widdecombe Fair*, now E.94, sung by him. When the late Sabine Baring Gould first started to collect folk-songs, he asked anyone who knew of any to send him copies. But instead of receiving a large number of songs, he received a large number of copies of one song, *Widdecombe Fair*. Cecil Sharp found an interesting relic, the original "skeleton" of this song, in Somerset. A few centuries ago it would be sold on broadsheets, headed (blank) *Fair*. The purchaser filled in the blank with the name of his own village, and the refrain with the names of local worthies. The "skeleton" appears in Sharp's collection as *Midsummer Fair* with an interesting and presumably older variant of the tune and just gibberish for the refrain.

I bought the whole set of *Songs from the Week-end Book* without hesitation. They include Sir Richard Terry's arrangement of *Rio Grande*, the best of all shanties, and another particular favourite of mine, *A-Roving*. If Mr. Goss feels like recording some more, may we have *The Dead Horse, Shallow Brown* and *The Bully Boat*? I am afraid I cannot commend the two sung by Arthur Jordan on Col. 3566. They are sentimentalised, there is a conventional high note at the end of certainly one of them, and I cannot help thinking that if the hands were so slow over the job, there would be a few words from the mate.

The English Singers have recorded some arrangements of folk-songs: *The Holly and the Ivy*, as used by Rutland Boughton in *Bethlehem*, and *The Spring Time of the Year, The Turtle Dove* and the *Wassail Song*, arranged by Vaughan Williams. I am particularly fond of the *Wassail Song*. It has been found in many places, in one or other of two main types. This is the smoother version, from Gloucestershire. The De Reszke Singers have done two more by Vaughan Williams, *Bushes and Briars* and *The Winter is Gone*, issued in April.

There were a number of folk-tunes in *The Beggar's Opera* and *Polly*, and Rutland Boughton incorporated several in *Bethlehem*. It is well known that Vaughan Williams takes English folk-music as his model, and in *Hugh the Drover* he introduced *Primroses, May-Day Carol, Toy Lambs, Cockles, Tuesday Morning, Maria Martin* and *Maying Song*. Holst went further and constructed *At the Boar's Head* almost entirely out of folk-tunes. No records have yet been published of this work, but there is no harm in mentioning that the greater number of the tunes are folk-dance tunes, particularly of country dances, at any rate in the forms used by him.

For recording, let us hope, in the near future, everybody will have their own favourites to propose. In addition to the shanties mentioned above, the following are some suggestions from Cecil Sharp's collection: *As I walked through the meadows*, one of the versions of *The Lover's Tasks, The Sheep Shearing, Green Broom, The Greenland Fishery, As I was going to Banbury, Three Little Tailors, The Three Sons, The Poor Couple, The Red Herring*, the Somerset *Wassail Song, William Taylor, The Brisk Young Widow, Master Kilby, Pretty Caroline, The Streams of Lovely Nancy*. But there are so many desiderata both in his and other collections that I think I had better stop. I will only mention *My Boy Billy* (Vaughan Williams), partly for its own sake and partly for comparison with *Billy Boy* in *The Week-End Book*, and *Twenty, Eighteen* (rather a refreshing change from the usual "pretty fair maid one morning in May"), with which Clive Carey gave me and the audience great pleasure when he sang it during the English Folk Dance Society's week at the King's Theatre, Hammersmith, in 1923.

THE FORUM

The following articles are unsolicited contributions from readers, dealing with this or that aspect of the gramophone to which each has given thought. A selection from the MSS. received is published every month, and prizes are offered every quarter. Articles should not exceed 1,500 words, and should be typewritten or written very legibly on one side only of the paper. They should be sent to THE GRAMOPHONE, 58, FRIETH STREET, LONDON, W.1., marked "The Forum": and a stamped and addressed envelope should be enclosed.



"ONE — THING AFTER ANOTHER"

By ALFRED H. BASSANO

AN old friend used to say, in all arguments, "Please define your terms." And differences of opinion often vanish, under definition, when we may prove to be talking or thinking of quite different things. Take, as instances, the Fibre v. Steel controversy. Yes, but on what machine? Fibres do not suit all makes. Again, see p. 8, vol. 3, Schubert Trio, "Ridiculous piano," and another verdict, "wonderful especially the piano." Just so, but on what machines? It would be more useful if writers would say: "with Fibre (or Steel) on my *Sotto Voce* machine." Perhaps many of us make little discoveries now and then (the Editor apparently makes big ones!) which seem to bring us nearer to our objective; but if we report these it is important to mention the make of gramophone used. Argument is now being focussed on the definition of realism. Mr. C. S. Davis seems to hit the mark when he says we aim to get the impression of a performance in a much bigger room, and it does not matter by what means we get that so long as we get it. I take it the realist is in search of the perfect illusion of listening to the actual performance of the players or singers; but perhaps the reason we dispute about results is that there is another factor which must not be ignored. The Editor touched on it in an early number when he wrote of the need for adjusting our standard from time to time by listening to actual concert performances. Does not our ear become accustomed to the translation (so to say) of music given by our own particular machine, and do we not listen *through* its medium and not *to* the medium itself? Think of the absurd tone in a telephone, or the ghastly tone of broadcast music in some "loud-speakers," and yet we recognise our friend's voice down to the finest details and without any sense of incongruity of the squeaky tone; and we appreciate orchestral detail even through the loud-speaker or the headphones. Probably more value might be set on the judgment of a competent *casual* friend upon our tone, and realism, since he would have no preconception of the allowances which we make unconsciously in our every day hearing, and find our ideal under the limitations so familiar to us.

Paderewski. The note on Paderewski's records was illuminating. I had seen no explanation previously why his records were so unsatisfactory, and somehow, a difficulty explained is less annoying. But why do piano records differ so much? Is it the piano? Or the player? Or both together? Cannot piano recording be so standardised as to leave only the personality of the pianist as the variable factor? Unless this, and many other troubles, are all done away by the foreshadowed improvements in recording.

Vol. 3, p. 32. A significant quotation occurs here. "The instruments themselves are twenty years behind the recording rooms." And so we continue to have discussions and scientific articles on "alignment" and "needle angle," &c. Why can we not persuade (that I may not say "drive") firms to correct these unscientific constructions? I have had to work out my own modifications by way of experiment, and to con-

siderable advantage. On my Columbia Grafonola, as on all other machines I have tested, I found three faults:—

(a) Unnecessary weight on needle point causing extra wear. This is corrected on some machines, I know, but I speak of the average machine. I fixed a stiff wire hook in one end of a piece of bamboo cane and a weight on the other end; the cane rests on the big end of the tone-arm so as to take the weight off the needle end by leverage. In the case of the Grafonola a wire round the big end of arm forms a bracket fulcrum for the cane. The balance weight is adjusted so as to give $3\frac{1}{2}$ ozs. on the needle, which was decided by experiment. This involves playing with the lid open, but the reduction of surface noise compensates for it.

(b) Needle angle. I adopted Capt. Barnett's "flat angle" of 45° , with marked diminution of surface noise and of needle and record wear, and with no loss of tone; though I see some still assert that there is loss. Query: On what make of machine? Or do they exceed the 45° angle? On some machines the slot has to be extended slightly to allow the sound-box to be turned to the flatter angle.

(c) Alignment. Far the more serious defect on all machines I have tried. According to theory and common-sense, the plane of the sound-box face should be tangential to a line drawn from the needle point to the centre of the spindle. This needs no discussion after the very able articles of Mr. Wilson. I dodged his science by a rule of thumb method; lay a postcard with the near right-hand corner at the needle point on the record, and with the near long side across the centre of the spindle. Then the sound-box face should be along, or parallel to, the short side of the card. My Columbia No. 7 sound-box was not, so I had to slacken the screws at the back and pack out one side to get the face into the right line. In another type I made a wooden wedge and bored it from each side at a different angle and then fitted the sound-box into one side, and an adapter to tone-arm into the other, thus throwing the sound-box face into correct alignment, as above. The nett result of these modifications, (a), (b) and (c), is a considerable reduction of surface noise and of wear on needle and record and, I am sure, a great gain in quality of tone. Needles wear much longer, though there can be no rule for this, as different records wear the point differently and the magnifying glass should be kept going, and the needle partly turned after each side played, of course.

Miniature Scores. I wonder how many disregard these because they cannot read music. A contributor to these pages will bear me out that a knowledge of "notation" is not indispensable. The eye readily follows the movements of each instrument as it becomes prominent and one soon learns to associate sound and notes. It is in this way only that so many choristers pick up musical notation; the eye helps out the ear, and the ear backs up the eye. Try the small score of, say, a Haydn Quartet, and see how quickly the ability to follow a score develops. The enjoyment of a quartet, and then of a symphony, is most surprisingly increased. Try it; it is well worth while.

HUGH THE DROVER

(Five d.s. records, H.M.V. D922—6)

By WILFRID H. OLDAKER

IN THE GRAMOPHONE for December, 1924, these records have been already reviewed by "N. P." He began his critique: "Comparatively few people can yet have heard this opera, so it is to be hoped they will not fight shy of these delightful records." Only the sales lists of the Gramophone Company can tell whether this aspiration has been realised; however, during the last six months the opera has been given perhaps more performances than any other English opera, and each performance has attracted large audiences. Manchester has seen it, as given by the B.N.O.C., and approved; and in their London season, at the Golders Green Theatre, it proved equally successful. Rumour even says that the opera has been translated into German and had several performances in Germany.

Perhaps it would not be unfair to ascribe this quick popularity in very large measure to the courage of the Gramophone Company in issuing these records. They had never done such a thing before; they have always waited until an opera is established as a popular favourite. We hope that this policy will not be abandoned.

The records do not, it goes without saying, include the whole opera. It may therefore be helpful to go through them, pointing out the passages recorded and their place both in the full vocal score (published by Messrs. Curwen's, 15s.) and the book of words (same publisher, 1s. 6d.). It must be realised that the references, in places, can only be approximate, there being parts in which the orchestration makes accuracy very difficult in following with a piano score.

RECORD NO. 1.—THE FAIR. OPENING SCENE, PART 1.

Score.—Begins at beginning of overture (page 3); ends page 20, bar 5. Cut from top page 12 to page 14, third stave; from end of same stave to page 16, letter G.

Book.—Cut from page 8, the entry of the dummy's procession, from the Cheap-jack's last shout of "Going, going, gone," to the end of the chorus following the first verse of the Showman's song. The record ends with the chorus after the second verse of the same song.

The scene is a fair, just outside a small Cotswold town; the year 1812, i.e., the middle of the Napoleonic Wars; the day April 30th for Act I, May 1st for Act II. The overture, marked "allegro vivacissimo" is truly one of the most lively and vivacious pages of the whole work. The use made of different folk-songs sung by short soloists (especially the Shell-fish Seller, the Toy-lamb Seller, and the Primrose Seller) is noteworthy, together with the way in which they are blended contrapuntally with the chorus. The incident which is cut is the unimportant one in which Napoleon's effigy is carried on; the Showman promises to burn it the same night.

RECORD NO. 2.—THE FAIR, PART 2.

Score.—Begins at end of No. 1; ends page 34, letter O. Cut from page 21, stave 1, bar 1, to page 22, stave 2, bar 2; from page 23, letter I, to page 23, stave 3, bar 2; from page 24, stave 3, bar 3, to page 25, stave 4, bar 1; from page 26, stave 2, bar 2, to page 28, stave 5, bar 2; from page 29, stave 1, bar 2, to page 29, stave 3, bar 4. From here to the end of the record is complete, except four bars from the second bar of page 34.

Book.—Begins top of page 10; ends page 12: Mary, "I'm my own to-day." Page 10: Cut the chorus, "Hark,

who's that?" and the Ballad Seller's reply. Cut from Nancy, "What's this" to Susan, "All on the red barn floor." From Ballad Seller, "I heard a young damsel" (first time), to Mary, "so sweetly shall sing." Page 11: From top (Aunt Jane) to Constable, "'Tis rank ingratitude."

This record is rather more of a patchwork, but contains what is perhaps the finest tune of the whole work, the *Ballad of Tuesday Morning*, another folk tune. The small quavering tenor voice of the Ballad Seller forms a good contrast to the burliness of the Chorus. Most notable is the extraordinary passion which Miss Mary Lewis puts into her last repetition of the words, "Oh, I'm to be married on a Tuesday morning." The first time she is only joining in the chorus of a familiar tune; only the last time does she realise that the words apply to herself. The long solo of John the Butcher is well sung in an appropriately boastful strain.

RECORD NO. 3.—THE MORRIS MEN.

Score.—Begins page 37, stave 3; ends page 47, stave 1. Cut from page 38, stave 1, bar 3, to stave 3, beginning. From page 41, stave 1, bar 4, to page 42, stave 2, bar 1; from page 42, stave 4, bar 4, to page 43, stave 3, bar 1; from page 44, stave 5, bar 4, to page 45, stave 4, bar 1.

Book.—Begins page 13. Some boys, "Here come the Morris men"; ends Hugh's linnet song, first verse, "Hop in it." Cut chorus, "The Morris Men" to Fool, "lazy rascals." From Mary, "My husband that's to be . . ." to page 14, Aunt Jane, "You go too far." Of Aunt Jane's song, cut from "Trust me it matters not" to "These are the only joys that last." From Aunt Jane, "And break your troth?" to Hugh, "She will obey."

Again patchwork. The Morris men enter and march round the stage, serving to draw off the crowd and give an opportunity for Hugh to meet Mary. One effective point, where Hugh joins in at the end of Mary's reply to Aunt Jane's good counsels, is cut on the record. As a result, Aunt Jane has to call upon him to "explain your rudeness," when he has apparently acted in complete accordance with etiquette, and spoken to no one without an introduction.

RECORD NO. 4.—THE SONG OF HUGH THE DROVER.

Score.—Starts page 50, stave 1, bar 2; complete to page 57, stave 3, bar 1. (Aunt Jane's part for the last four bars is not sung.)

Words.—From page 15, Hugh, "Horse-hoofs, horse-hoofs . . ." to page 16, " . . . the seal of the rover."

This is perhaps the finest side of all, and is certainly Tudor Davies' best record to date. The part is one which suits him admirably; it must be robust to be convincing, and he is this already. His voice, in spite of this robustness, seems to show a much greater self-restraint than it has before. On occasions it is as mellow and sunny as anyone could desire.

RECORD NO. 5.—THE LOVE DUET.

Score.—Starts page 57, stave 5; complete to end to page 62.

Words.—Begins page 16, Mary, "Oh, who are you," to page 17, Hugh, "Oh royal woman, you are mine at last."

This, too, is a very fine side. Mary's song, "In the night-time . . ." with the last word of each line repeated, is most effective. The lovers' embrace, at the end of the record, is depicted in a short passage for orchestra, which is pure Wagner, and very fine Wagner too.

RECORD NO. 6.—THE CHALLENGE AND THE FIGHT.

Score.—Begins page 73, letter Ii; ends with end of Act, page 120. Cut from page 77, stave 1, bar 2, to page 86, stave 4; from page 97, stave 1, bar 2, to page 107, stave 3; from page 110, end, to page 117, stave 1, bar 3.

Words.—Begins page 19, "Oh, the devil . . ."; ends page 26 (end of Act I). Cut page 19, Showman, "That's the way . . ." to page 21, Showman, ". . . and a pretty wife." From page 22, Turnkey, "Oh dear, oh dear . . ." to page 24, chorus, "Hugh the Drover!" From page 25, stage-direction, "John has by this time . . ." to page 26, Constable, "Take him, seize him."

The title is badly chosen; the record consists of four excerpts, and neither the challenge nor the fight are included. The incidents recorded are the Showman's song, with chorus, "The Devil and Bonaparty"; the Ensemble, in which the composer attempts something like the quintet in *Der Meistersinger* (with the addition of a choral background) and with almost as great success; Hugh's victory, with the chorus, "The cock has had his comb cut"; and the finale, in which Hugh is denounced as a spy.

RECORD NO. 7.—MAY MORNING.

Score.—Begins with Act II (page 121); Ends page 132, letter I. Cut from page 121, stave 2, bar 2, to page 122, stave 4, bar 2; from page 124, letter B, to page 124, letter C; from page 125, stave 4, bar 3, to page 127, stave 3, bar 1; from page 130, letter G, to page 130, stave 3, bar 6.

Book.—Begins page 27; ends page 29, John, ". . . My belly with beer." Page 27: Cut from Ballad Seller, "Past four o'clock . . ." to stage-direction, ". . . all is quiet again." Cut from Hugh, "Gaily I go to die . . ." to "loved my Mary"; from (page 28) Hugh, "But she must linger . . ." to John and chorus, ". . . My belly with beer"; from (page 29), Ballad Seller, "Day's coming in . . ." to chorus, "We must be gone."

The scene is the market-place of the town, with the Constable's house on one side and the Turnkey's on the other; next to the Constable's house, a tavern.

The introduction to the second act is founded on the famous psalm-tune, *York*, played on the bells of the town's church, to mark the hour of four o'clock. The tune is from the Scottish Psalter (seventeenth century). The scene, with the half-drunk villagers, led by John, tormenting Hugh as he sits in the stocks, is most effective on the stage.

RECORD NO. 8.—MARY SETS HUGH FREE.

Score.—Begins page 139, letter N; complete to page 146, stave 3, bar 4.

Words.—Begins page 30, Hugh, "O foolish girl, O radiant soul . . ." to page 31, Mary and Hugh, ". . . still together, you and I."

Again a misnomer; Hugh has been set free before the record starts. The most notable part is the final duet, in unison except for a few bars.

RECORD NO. 9.—MARY JOINS HUGH IN THE STOCKS.

Score.—Begins page 158, letter W; ends bottom of page 176. Cut from page 159, stave 4, bar 5, for eight bars; from page 160, stave 2, to stave 3, bar 3; from page 161, stave 1, bar 2, for four bars; from page 162, stave 2, bar 2, to page 172, stave 3, bar 5; from page 173, stave 1, bar 4, for eight bars.

Words.—Begins page 34, Mary, "Sweet little home in my lover's arms," and ends page 37, chorus, "Oh, that she should treat us so." Cut (page 34), John's voice, "Oh, I've been . . ." to Mary, "hold me fast." From (page 35), John, "Mary! Jane! . . ." to page 37, chorus, "What will they do."

The story is rather difficult to follow on this record. After John had stumbled off the stage (No. 7), a-maying for Mary, Mary came out of her father's house (one side of the stage), having stolen the keys of the stocks from the Turnkey, and set Hugh free. Record No. 8 follows. At the end of it dawn begins to appear, and the Constable pushes his head out of a window, shouting for his boots. Hugh jumps back into the stocks, to avoid detection, and Mary crouches down by his side, hidden by his cloak. The Constable and Turnkey rush out on to the stage, with the alarm that "the spy's escaped." After much shouting he is discovered to be in the stocks after all; in the dim half-light, no one notices Mary. They leave the Turnkey to watch, and then return to bed. But the watcher soon falls asleep, and Hugh and Mary are just about to make another attempt to escape, when they find all ways barred by the men who are returning from their maying. This time, therefore, they put themselves side by side into the stocks. Here the gap between Nos. 8 and 9 ends.

With the beginning of No. 9 the pair are sitting in the stocks. The chorus return, and the lovers are discovered (the actual discovery is cut).

The material of this side is very effective on the stage, but from its essentially dramatic nature loses a good deal in recording. There is a passage of fine orchestral writing at the beginning of the record; the brightening dawn is very skilfully suggested. The warm scoring for the harp is especially noteworthy.

RECORD NO. 10.—THE SERGEANT RELEASES HUGH.

Score.—Begins page 191, letter Oo; ends with end of opera. Cut page 194, stave 3, bar 2, to page 198, stave 4, bar 1; from page 202, stave 1, bar 4, to page 210, stave 4.

Words.—Begins page 40, Sergeant, "Dropped from the ranks . . ." Cut from page 41, Sergeant, "Now, what the devil . . ." to page 42, Aunt Jane, "My darling, stay"; from page 42, Mary, "My friends, I love you dear . . ." to page 44, ". . . When the blood runs high."

There is one rather puzzling passage on page 211 of the score, Mary's words, "So the drover claims his bride." In the bar immediately before letter Yy, Miss Mary Lewis appears to sing the first four notes of the upward phrase flat. Whether this is merely a mistake, due to the prominence of D flat in the immediately following accompaniment, or a misprint in the score, or possibly a definite emendation on the part of the composer, it is very difficult to decide. As sung on the record, the passage has a distinctly Ravelian flavour.

Concerning these records as a whole, there is only one thing to be regretted, that there are not more of them. The recording is good throughout, and the balance between soloists, chorus, and orchestra admirably maintained by the conductor, Malcolm Sargent (the regular conductor of this opera for the B.N.O.C.). The uncut portions are, as a rule, and naturally enough, more effective than the "patchwork" sides; but a certain amount of patchwork was inevitable, if the story was to be preserved without attempting a complete recording. Where done, the patching has been well done, and the most gramophonically effective parts have been chosen.

Contributors to THE FORUM must be warned that the receipt of proofs is only an indication that it is hoped to find room, sooner or later, for their article. There is a very long waiting list. We are inclined to copy the exhortation addressed by the Editor of the Dictionary of National Biography to his contributors

"No Flowers, by Special Request."

DANCE MUSIC OF TO-DAY AND TO-MORROW

By ARTHUR W. GAYTON

IT is not my intention here unduly to extol the qualities of syncopated music, or to contest that it is, in its present phase of development, at least, other than a frankly popular and ephemeral minor art form. It is, of course, primarily a means to an end, something to which to fit steps, but that its possibilities simply as music have been realised is obvious when one contemplates the comparatively rapid evolution of the highly organised dance *ensemble* of to-day from the "nightmare and kitchen-utensil" school of ten years ago.

Even now dance music is still disliked and despised by many (my experience has been that people either like it very much or not at all), but I am convinced that this is largely owing to their seldom having heard it to advantage, since there are very few bands in this country equal to playing it well. Most English bands, like most of our films, strike me as having something amateurish about them. Jack Hylton's I believe to be the best all-round combination we possess. The Savoy Orpheans deal very creditably with waltzes, but not so happily, I think, with most of their fox-trots. (An illustration of what these players, whose virtuosity, at any rate, is unquestionable, *can* do when they resist cacophony, is afforded by their waltz-setting of the well-known *Liebesträume*—H.M.V., B.2012. This is splendidly arranged, played and recorded, and contains nothing to offend even the hypercritical. It is interesting to compare this record with that of another minor classic adapted for the dance orchestra, Paul Whiteman's arrangement as a fox-trot of the *Méditation from Thaïs*—Victor 19391. This, too, is so tastefully performed as to disarm criticism.) Probably what both the Orpheans and Hylton's orchestra need more than anything at the moment is a skilled and original orchestrator. At all events these are the only two bands amongst the many I have heard in this country which I consider have any claim to be called first-rate, and even they do not attain to the standard of brilliance of the leading American organisations.

But when syncopated music is capably played, does it compare unfavourably with other forms of popular light music? Edward Fitzgerald is said to have remarked of that celebrated song of other days, *Champagne Charlie*, that "at least it had 'go' which Mendelssohn hadn't," and I venture to suggest that the lilt of dance music is considerably more vital, exhilarating and infectious than the stereotyped offerings of the brass or military band, or municipal orchestra, or than the stock-in-trade of the ballad-monger of the popular concert. Personally, I would prefer an infinity of fox-trots, howsoever performed, to *The Merchant of Venice Suite*, *In a Monastery Garden*, reminiscences of somebody or other, and those hardy perennial Sullivan selections, and the wildest of syncopations to the *Roses and yew!* of Carrie Jacobs-Bond, Tosti and Guy d'Hardelot.

It will not be denied, I think, that in pure executive ability the practised dance musician easily surpasses his fellows of the military band and municipal orchestra, for dance work demands an extremely high standard of virtuosity, precision and alertness. (A striking example of the first-named quality may be found in an extraordinary solo on a muted cornet—or trumpet, I am not sure which—in *The Melody that Made You Mine*, waltz, by the Vincent Lopez Orchestra—Parlophone E.5367.) This may be confirmed by hearing a first-class military band play a fox-trot. It is well played after a fashion, but there is usually lacking just that swing and verve which make the dance orchestra so fascinating and inimitable.

It may not be out of place to examine some of the principal

objections taken to dance music of the present. Firstly, there is *noise*. This is rapidly decreasing in the best bands and has almost been eliminated. Let anyone who doubts this visit a music-hall where Mr. Hylton is playing and compare the quantity and quality of the sound produced by his men and the theatre orchestra respectively. Secondly, there is the *insistency of the percussion*. "Why," people ask, "must we have that continual tum-tum-tum?" Well, of course, a certain amount is indispensable for dancing purposes, but it has been reduced from its former objectionable prominence almost to imperceptibility by masters like Lopez and Whiteman. Thirdly, there is the *jazz element*—"stunting," comic muting, and other eccentricities. This, likewise, is fortunately on the wane, and, indeed, should be dispensed with altogether, except, perhaps, for certain numbers of the "blues" type, in which judicious and expert use of it may serve to impart a welcome flavouring of comedy.

Lastly, we have the most cogent complaint of all—the poor quality of most of the music itself, and the almost inevitable imbecility of the title and lyrics (euphemism!). appended to it. The force of this criticism is incontestable, and one can but join in deploring the vast quantities of rubbish unloosed upon us, in contrast to the clever musicians and elaborate orchestrations too frequently wasted upon it.

I have never been able to understand why a dance tune must always be cast in the form of a popular song. Possibly it is because in the early days fox-trots were adapted from ragtime songs. In any case, the method has persisted ever since, with the result that, in order to relieve the monotonous repetition of one verse and one chorus, all sorts of tricks have to be resorted to, such as alternations of solos on various instruments, vocal choruses, *staccato*-like "chopping up" of the melody, and the introduction of snippets of hackneyed minor classics, operatic arias or old songs. (Thus, in *Leander*—H.M.V. B.2009—otherwise an excellent record, the verse of the song is played once and the chorus repeated four times off the reel.)

It was reported some little while ago that Jack Hylton had invited some of our more eminent composers to write dance tunes for him, but so far, there has been, as they say in the Artillery, "no result observed," and small wonder, for who would willingly identify himself with the creators of *Horsely*, *Keep Your Tail Up!* and *Eat More Fruit!*? This intrinsic, or, more often, associated inanity of the contemporary dance composition has, undoubtedly, contributed more than anything to bring it into disrepute with intelligent music-lovers, and it seems to me that if the creative side of dance music is to improve as the executive side has done, so that in time the best composers will not deem it beneath their dignity to write for the dance orchestra, the first step must be to divorce the music from monstrosities anent "sweeties" or "the old home in Oshkosh, Wis." I thought I had desecrated the dawn of a "wordless" era in the barcarolle-like *By the Lake* (H.M.V. B.1933—in my opinion easily the most artistically rendered fox-trot the Savoy Orpheans have ever given us. Its attractiveness is largely due, perhaps, to the fact that it is the work of one of the most famous of American "arrangers," Arthur Lange.) until there arrived a vocal record of it—Imperial 1414.

Why cannot we break away from this slavish "song" tradition, and have coherent, synthetic pieces of music, written in syncopated rhythms, to last, say, from three to five minutes, the length of the average dance, or longer ones, which the "non-stop-dancing" enthusiasts would approve, lasting, say, a quarter of an hour or more, into which changes

of time and theme could be introduced? If this were done, I believe that the standard of dance music would improve enormously and that there might be evolved, ultimately, something fit to rank with the gavottes of Bach or the Hungarian Dances of Brahms.

The first performance in London, on June 15th last, of Mr. Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue* (H.M.V. C.1171), the only work of significance yet produced by a "jazz" composer, leads us to hope that there are still great possibilities in this type of music.

ARTHUR W. GAYTON.

LIST of RECORDED MUSIC of RICHARD STRAUSS

[The following is a list compiled by Dr. Britzius and Mr. Vories Fisher, of Minneapolis. It has been checked, as far as possible, in the London Office, and catalogue numbers have been added. In view of the present vogue of Strauss's music, the list may be of great value to our readers.]

BURGER ALS EDELMANN (LE BOURGEOIS GENTILHOMME).

- Overture, Vorspiel zum 2. Aufzug.*—Polydor 040866-77. Conducted by the composer.
Auftritt und Tanz der Schneider.—Polydor 040868. Conducted by the composer.
Diner-Walzer.—Polydor 040870-71. Conducted by the composer.
Menuette de Lully and Intermezzo, Act II.—Brunswick 50017. Conducted by the composer.
Overture (Jourdan the Bourgeois) and Entrance and Dance of the Tailors.—Col. L.1552. Conducted by Hamilton Harty.
Minuet (after Lully) and Intermezzo (Count and Countess).—Col. L.1555. Conducted by Hamilton Harty.
Dinner Music and Dance of the Young Cooks and The Minuet of Lully.—Col. L.1556. Conducted by Hamilton Harty.

ARIADNE AUF NAXOS.

- Overture.*—Polydor 040869. Conducted by the composer.
Rezitatif und Arie der Zerbinetta.—German Odeon 530012. *Hermine Bosetti.*—German Odeon 80205-6. *Maria Gerhardt.*
Es gibt ein Reich.—German Odeon 79201. *Maria Jeritza.*
In den Schönen Feierkleidern.—German Odeon 79202. *Maria Jeritza.*

DER ROSENKAVALIER.

- Monolog der Marschallin.*—Polydor B.24167. *E. Girtner-Fischer* (soprano). Parlophone E.10341. *Emmy Bettendorf.*
Duet Act 2.—H.M.V. 1002 and German Odeon 790725. *Eva Plaschke* von der Osten and *Minnie Nast.*
Walzer.—(Any number from almost any company.)
Duet Act 3.—H.M.V. 1002 and German Odeon 790723. *Eva Plaschke* von der Osten and *Minnie Nast.*
Entrance of the Rosenkavalier and Finale of Opera.—Vocalion K.05101.
Trio. Hab' mir's gelobt.—German Odeon 79074. *Margaret Sims,* *Nast* and *von der Osten.*
Italianische Arie des Sangers.—German Odeon 81041. *Richard Tauber.*

SALOME.

- Opening Scene.*—H.M.V. D.908. *Ljungberg, Walker, Hallam Davies* and *Baker.*
Jokanaan is Summoned before Herod.—H.M.V. D.908. *Peter Dawson* (bass-baritone).
Dance of the Seven Veils.—H.M.V. D.909. Conducted by *A. Coates.* Col. L.1422 and Brunswick 50002. Conducted by the composer. *Victor 6240.* Conducted by *L. Stokowski.* Parlophone P.1700. Conducted by *Dr. Weissmann.*
Szene des Jokanaan.—Parlophone P.1702 and P.1710. *Theodor Scheidl* (baritone). German Odeon 51176. *Rudolph Berger.*
Szenen des Heroldes.—Parlophone P.1701. *Anton Topitz* (tenor).
The Head of Jokanaan.—H.M.V. D.910. *Göta Ljungberg* (soprano).
Schlussgesang der Salome.—German Odeon. *Barbara Kemp* (soprano).
Jokanaan, Ich bin verliebt.—Victor (withdrawn). *Gadski.*
Jokanaan, der aurst Schön.—German Odeon 76242. *Barbara Kemp.*
Ach, ich habe deinen Mund geküßt.—German Odeon 76243. *Barbara Kemp.*

TONE POEMS.

- Don Juan.*—H.M.V. D.670-1 and Victor 55176-7. Conducted by *A. Coates.* Polydor 040872-5 and Col. L.1419-20. Conducted by the composer. Parlophone E.10254-5. Conducted by *E. Moerike.*

- Till Eulenspiegel's Lustige Streiche.*—H.M.V. D.608-9. Conducted by *A. Coates.* Col. 1067. Conducted by *Sir H. J. Wood.* Polydor 040876-9. Conducted by the composer.
Tod und Verklärung.—H.M.V. D.743-4. Conducted by *A. Coates.* Col. L.1621-2. Conducted by *Bruno Walter.* Parlophone E.10270-2. Conducted by *H. Abendrath.*
Heldenleben.—Parlophone E.10306-10. Conducted by *E. Moerike.*
Also Sprach Zarathustra.—Polydor B.210436-41. Conducted by *Max von Schillings.*

SONGS.

- Ständchen.*—Polydor 4-42629, *H. Jadlowker* (tenor); Polydor B.2096, *L. Slezak* (tenor); Polydor 2-43518 and Brunswick 10153, *C. Dux* (soprano); Polydor B.24038, *F. Hempel* (soprano); Vocalion A.0216, *E. Gerhardt* (soprano); German Odeon 80386, *E. Rethberg*; H.M.V. D.A.632, *S. Kurz* (soprano).
Zueignung.—Polydor B.2060, *K. A. Oestvig* (tenor); German Odeon 76755, *C. Tauber* (tenor); Polydor B.42076, *Dr. Kothé* (baritone); Polydor B.2010, *H. Schlusnus* (baritone); Parlophone P.1207, *A. Wilde* (tenor).
Ich liebe dich.—Polydor B.2060, *K. A. Oestvig* (tenor); Polydor B.2008, *H. Schlusnus* (baritone).
Heimkehr.—Polydor B.2007, *H. Schlusnus* (baritone); Polydor 4039, *E. Girtner-Fischer* (soprano).
Traum durch die Dämmerung.—Polydor B.205, *F. Schorr* (baritone); Polydor 943419, *E. von Endert* (soprano); Victor, *E. Schumann-Heink* (soprano). German Odeon 80714, *Jacques Urlus.*
Heimliche Aufforderung.—Polydor 4-42660, *J. Schwarz* (baritone); Polydor B.44046, *M. Dannenberg* (soprano); Polydor B.22170, *L. Slezak* (tenor).
Du Heiligen drei Könige aus dem Morgenland.—Polydor B.24144, *E. Schumann* (soprano).
Wiegenliedschen.—Polydor 4013, *E. Farber-Strasser.*
Das Geheimnis.—Polydor V.2012, *H. Schlusnus* (tenor).
Als mir dein Leid erklang.—Parlophone P.1168, *F. Steiner* (baritone).
Cäcilie.—Vocalion B.3115, *E. Gerhardt* (soprano); Parlophone P.1167, *F. Steiner* (baritone); Polydor B.24029, *L. Lehmann* (soprano).
Blaue Sommer.—Odeon, *E. Schumann* (soprano).
Aller Seelen (All Souls' Day).—H.M.V. E.51, *J. Harrison* (tenor); Victor 17179, *R. Werrenrath* (baritone).
Morgen.—Polydor B.2006, *R. Hutt* (tenor); Polydor 4-42587, *H. Jadlowker* (tenor); German Odeon 80082, *Richard Tauber*; Polydor B.4009, *E. Farber-Strasser* (contralto); Polydor 24003; *E. Stuckgold* (soprano); Vocalion B.3112, *E. Gerhardt* (soprano); Victor 538, *F. Alda* (soprano); Polydor B.24096, *L. Lehmann* (soprano); German Odeon 57811, *E. Schumann.* German Odeon 80082, *C. Tauber.*
Breit über mein Haupt.—Polydor B.2005, *R. Hutt* (tenor).
Freundliche Vision.—Polydor B.22040, *H. Jadlowker* (tenor); Polydor B.2097, *L. Slezak* (tenor); Polydor 4-42649, *J. Schwarz* (baritone); Polydor 943418, *E. van Endert* (soprano); Velvet Face 602, *T. Makushina* (soprano).
Winterweih (In diesen Wintertagen).—Polydor B.22053, *H. Jadlowker* (tenor); Parlophone P.1168, *F. Steiner* (tenor).
Ich trage meine Minne.—Polydor 4-42587, *H. Jadlowker* (tenor); Polydor 2099, *Leo Slezak* (tenor).
Ruhe meine Seele.—Polydor B.2009, *H. Schlusnus* (baritone); Odeon, *C. Tauber* (tenor); Polydor B.4019, *M. Olszewska* (contralto).
Die Nacht.—Polydor 32011, *H. Schlusnus* (baritone).
Schlechtes Wetter.—Odeon, *Lotta Schöne.*
Amor.—Polydor B.24155, *Katharine Arkandy* (soprano).

[The above list must be very nearly complete. Any information on Strauss Records not mentioned would be extremely welcome from readers.]

ARMCHAIR PHONATICS

By P. WILSON.

V.—Record Wear (*continued*)

IT is of special importance to users of fibres or Xylopins to keep their records clean. Grit has a greater wearing effect with a needle made of soft material than it has with one made of hard metal. The soft material uses the grit as an abrasive: a soft tool and a hard abrasive is an excellent scouring combination! This will lead to wear of the first kind described in the second article of this series (June) issue.

I fancy that we have here the explanation of two seemingly contradictory facts. It has puzzled me for some time to explain how it is that playing a record once with a steel needle may help a fibre to go through, whilst playing a few times will hinder it even though no signs of wear are apparent. Very few steel needles reach to the bottom of the groove, whilst a fibre touches nowhere but the bottom. How then can the one help or hinder the other? I suggest firstly, that the steel needle which does most good is the one which does by chance reach to the bottom, and secondly, that the fine particles of metal worn from a steel needle remain in the bottom of the groove and become embedded in the point of the fibre. If there is not too much of it, the steel dust will help the fibre to smooth out inequalities, but a surplus will break the point and take a longer time to remove. If this explanation is correct we are led to the following conclusions:

1. It is bad practice to alternate with fibre and steel needles on the same record.
2. After a record has been played with steel, the fibre should be repointed several times during the first playing with fibre.
3. At any time, a fibre should not be allowed to play on after it shows signs of "going."
4. A record preparation or lubricant defeats its purpose if it remains soft (or liquid) enough to retain grit or metal dust. I have tried a number of such preparations and remain unconvinced that any of them do any good.

The fact that fibres and Xylopins break down under exceptional stress provides a valuable test of the record-wearing properties of a machine or sound-box, especially if soft, undoped needles and clean, unworn records are used. Anyone who finds great difficulty in getting these needles to stand up may be quite sure that their records would wear at an alarming rate if metal needles were used. I find little difficulty in making a soft fibre

last twelve ordinary records without recutting, even though I use a weight of over 6 ounces on the record and have only $\frac{1}{4}$ in. of the fibre projecting from the socket. I went through as many as forty sides during one of my tests in which I used a lighter weight. With some Xylopins of a new kind which I tested recently, I found that I could play four or five records with ease even when I used a weight on the record of 7 ounces. The volume was not so great as I get with a good fibre, but the tone quality was excellent and was practically identical with every one of the needles I used.

The question is sometimes asked whether the shell of a fibre should be on the left or the right. From the mechanical point of view the answer is that it does not matter provided that the machine is level so that there is no side pressure; but if there is a tendency for the tone-arm to swing inwards the shell had better be on the inside, i.e. the left. At the same time, I must confess that the best fibres I know (Nightingales) have the shell on the right. The advantages with them seem to be that they are made of better material, that most cutters (the "Wade" is an exception) cut the right hand side *last*, so that if the shell is there the cutter leaves a clean point, and that a right-hand shell prevents the needle-screw from pressing into and splitting the fibre.

* * *

The width of a record groove at the top is not more than $\frac{1}{120}$ of an inch and may be less than $\frac{1}{150}$ of an inch. The depth is less than $\frac{1}{250}$ of an inch as a rule. The vertical section of the groove has an angle of about 80° with the point rounded off by the "creeping" of the metal during the electro-plating when the matrices are made. It follows that the width of the groove at the bottom where the rounding off begins is about $\frac{1}{1000}$ of an inch. The dimensions of the grooves of different makes of record vary, but the $\frac{1}{1000}$ is not substantially altered in any of them. Very few metal needles have so fine a point as that and in consequence they usually ride on the walls of the groove and develop the familiar chisel point. The softer the metal the more difficult it is to get a firm fine point and the more readily is the chisel formed. Soft metal is very liable to buckle and since the groove is not straight the buckling is bound to be across it at some places and particularly where the waviness is pronounced.

P. WILSON.

(*To be continued.*)

TRADE WINDS AND IDLE ZEPHYRS

Mr. Manson

It is not too late for us to wish Mr. Manson, of the Gramophone Co., *bon voyage* on his departure for Australia, but it is perhaps late enough to look like seeing him off at the station; for he sails on the 11th. As London Manager in his room at Oxford Street he has kept a friendly eye on THE GRAMOPHONE since its earliest days, and his almost paternal courtesy has been a great help and encouragement to us from month to month, so that we shall miss him very much. Only the other day he brought Mrs. Manson to the Gramophone Congress at the Central Hall, and by this delicate compliment rounded off a chapter in our friendship which has many charming memories for us. Charming? Yes; for to hear Mr. Manson talk of the new H.M.V. records which he enjoyed at home in the evenings was to be conscious of the placid but very deep emotion with which he loves the great Company that he has seen growing by the magic of his hands.

Misprints

The London Editor was summoned to Jethou to convince himself that he had passed a very gross misprint in the Editor's article last month (page 107), by allowing the Amazon parrots in the verandah to be represented as being "vivacious" instead of "Vinaceous." On arrival he found both the birds moulting in their cage, sulky at sight of the man who had traduced them, and capable only of imitating the barking of the sheep-dog when his back was turned. They were certainly far from being vivacious. But what made them peculiarly Vinaceous he forgot to enquire.

Apollo Catalogue

Apollo Belvedere presides over the new catalogue (No. 25) issued by Messrs. Craies and Stavridi, of 4, Bunhill Row, E.C. 1, and on the back cover is a quotation from the report of our Expert Committee on the Apollo Super IV. It must not be supposed that the Super IV represents the whole range of Apollos. There are about thirty models, the most expensive of which is £27, and the portables which rise from £2 10s. to £4 10s. are described in a separate leaflet. Every reader should at least write for a catalogue.

Flonzaley, Lener and Spencer Dyke

We hear news of the Flonzaley Quartet enjoying a rehearsal holiday at Alfred Pochon's summer home at Lutry on the Lake of Geneva. By the irony of things fish are commonly supposed to be deaf. The Lener Quartet has been equally busy rehearsing for next season at Maloja, near St. Moritz, and the Spencer Dyke Quartet in Cornwall.

The Duophone Syndicate

Colonel Mackenzie Rogan brings much lustre to the revived fortunes of the Duophone Syndicate. But the Managing Director, Commander L. E. Gaunt, has also a distinguished connection with the Services. Although (or because) he was a barrister, he became an Intelligence Officer in the Straits Settlements in February, 1915; came home a year later to enlist in the R.H.A. reserve and was promptly given a commission; then transferred to the R.N.V.R. as Lieutenant and posted to H.M.S. St. Vincent, and hardly a year later promoted to Lieutenant Commander and appointed Assistant Naval Liaison Officer at Washington, after which he arrived at Scapa Flow as Naval Liaison Officer with the 6th American Battle Squadron. He ended up with the Anti-Submarine Division in charge of the East Coast mine-nets; and when the war was over and he was demobilised, he had the energy left to fight Commander Kenworthy at Central Hull and to reduce his majority by 3,000 votes in three weeks. This apparently was a Parliamentary contest.

We welcome a man with such a record in the gramophone world, and trust that nothing which we say or do will offend him. He and Colonel Mackenzie Rogan could soon cause a strategic withdrawal of the London staff to Jethou.

National Opera House

We are still anxious to secure among our readers as many subscribers as possible to the De Lara scheme, for an Imperial and Permanent Opera House in London. Those cheques for £1 are still very slow in coming in, though we guarantee to return them to the senders if the scheme fails, and though the speeches of Mr. de Lara and of the Editor at the Congress were strong enough and sensible enough to persuade the most impecunious and the most sceptical to help. Mr. de Lara went straight on from the Congress to the House of Commons where he addressed a well-attended meeting of Labour members under the chairmanship of Mr. Trevelyan, and, to judge by the report in the *Daily Telegraph* of July 10th, a big step has been taken. "The meeting unanimously supported the proposal" . . . "Mr. Trevelyan, Miss Bondfield, and Mr. J. Beckett were appointed a sub-committee in conjunction with Mr. de Lara, to arrange further details."

Surely *all* our readers will help? Cheques should be made out to "Gramophone (Publications) Ltd.," and sent to 58, Frith Street, W. 1.

Our Caricaturist

The shy author of "Review day at THE GRAMOPHONE," which appeared in the last number, has revealed his identity, entering the London Office under the flag of truce. Mr. E. Squire has promised to contribute some more caricatures to these pages, which will be welcome news to at least one reader, who writes: "For pose, expression, and real humour, 'Review Day' takes the cake. I don't know when I have enjoyed anything half so much. It also proves that in this age of pleasure we still have a few martyrs left."

The E.F.D.S.

Mr. Cameron, whose article on Folk-Song Records in this number will be followed by one on Folk-Dance Records, is the Editor of the *English Folk Dance Society News*, the magazine of the English Folk Dance Society which was founded by the late Cecil Sharp, and has its headquarters at Sicilian House, Sicilian Avenue, Southampton Row, London, W.C. 1.

Good News for Pussyfoots

The ungramphonic friend who sauntered into the London Office on the morning after and mistook a bottle of Britton's Famous Rapid Record Reviver, which was on the mantelpiece, for a new kind of pick-me-up, is still on the sick list.

A Note for Collectors

Messrs. Harry Macrae, of 8, North Bridge Arcade, Edinburgh, write to say that the Frieda Hempel record (H.M.V. D.A.251) mentioned in Notes and Queries, August, page 151, No. 337, was obtained by them for "J. H. B." after he had been told by eight different dealers that this record could not be purchased anywhere. So if you murmur "Wohin?" in your "Ungeduld" for some such rarity, you now know the answer.

Our Advertisers

Among new advertisers we note Messrs. Hawkes offering the wide range of Philharmonia Miniature Scores to our readers. Competition is healthy; and it is well that everyone should know that there are other miniature scores on the market besides the Eulenburg scores sold by Messrs. Goodwin and Tabb, and should secure the catalogues of both, since each series is able to supplement gaps in the other.

None but the very observant will notice that Messrs. Daws Clarke and Co. now announce a Needle Tension Attachment for the Columbia No. 7 sound-box, as well as for the H.M.V. Exhibition and No. 2 boxes. This novelty will interest a good many.

Table-Talk

(A running commentary on matters of special interest or of particular provocation, which appear in the current numbers of THE GRAMOPHONE)

III.—JULY.

OPERA AT HOME (p. 67c).—I wonder if we could ask for a company to give us entire one of Handel's Italian operas? These works contain plenty of fine solos, as that wonderful *Ombra mai fu* (*Serse*, 1737-38), universally known as Handel's *Largo in G*, and the moving *Lascia ch'io pianga* (*Rinaldo*, 1711), originally a sarabande in the still earlier opera of *Almira* (1705, the year Handel was twenty). The opera would have to be well cast, and a full translation of the text would have to be provided.

In Germany there has been a distinct revival of the long dead, and as history books have taught us, finally dead, Handel opera. I recollect seeing at different times since the war, notices of the production of about a dozen—*Almira*, *Orlando Furioso*, *Ottone*, *Giulio Cesare*, *Rodelinda*, *Admeto* and (if memory does not play false) *Porco*. The Germans would not waste time and money on the public production of things of only antiquarian interest; and as the eighteenth century Italian operas are mostly solo and recitative, with light orchestration, they would record well. From twelve to fifteen double-sided disks would contain one of them.

MUSICAL APPRECIATION (p. 72).—Writers of books on musical appreciation are simple-minded folk. They start off with the assumption that the reader is so thoroughly a beginner that he requires to be told that *forte* means loud and that Handel came before Wagner; and then in a moment they start quoting music in musical notation, which for the beginner is as unintelligible as Egyptian hieroglyphics.

I am afraid our present attempt to listen to gramophone orchestral music while reading the miniature score falls into the same category. We can, of course, "learn" musical appreciation, if we take lessons from a musician; but this is learning music, and we can learn to read a score if we have learned about music and have graded our exercises in reading.

In the July issue I said a few words (p. 78b) on following the score. Since then I have heard the Parlophone record of the slow movement of Haydn's *Surprise Symphony* (E.10243), and I recommend this as the first piece to be taken in hand after the student has learned to follow a song. He should locate the instruments in the partition or score—strings in the lower staves, wood wind in the upper, brass and percussion in the middle—and then fix the time (that is, the beats) in his mind, so that while the music is performing he can count or beat the time with eyes steadily moving across the page.

This particular Haydn is a set of variations on a theme. There is nothing better than variations for gramophonists who are just setting out to train the eye to read music, because the cadential phrases of the music are constantly repeated, and so the eye learns how to take in a phrase at a glance—exactly as in reading poetry it takes in a line, and in reading prose a clause or sentence.

Musical appreciation rests first on our instinctive understanding of music, and secondly on our perception of form; and form is a matter of co-ordinated phrases.

PLAYING WITH THE GRAMOPHONE (p. 74).—I have played on the Pianola simultaneously with the gramophone's reproduction of the music, my only trouble being to find records exactly in tune with the piano. It is, of course, the very mischief to keep the time right, and I was never successful until I had learned how to play the Pianola to the metronome, which keeps strict time, and to the amateur singer, who does not keep strict time, or any time at all.

I can imagine that to play fiddle, 'cello or viola with a good string quartet record must be a delightful experience. Readers of THE GRAMOPHONE who have done this ought to send up their experiences.

THE FEVERED SCHUBERT (p. 74b).—Who is this fevered Schubert of whom Mr. William Dixon and his collaborator speak? Surely not Franz; and yet it must be, for the work is the *Impromptu in B flat*. But Franz Schubert is never fevered, least of all when, as here in the *Impromptu*, again in the *Wanderer* fantasia, the *Wanderer* songs, the E flat rondo, Op. 145, and more than once in famous quartet movements, he adopts that rhythm which Beethoven employs to such sublimity of end in the slow movement of the seventh symphony.

Another point: if by chance the music were fevered, by what right would Paderewski, or any other interpreter, take the fever out of it and convert it to something of a soothing character? Let a conductor do this with a really fevered thing like the Tchaikowski *Symphonie Pathétique*, and our children would rise up and call him cursed, but his record would be destroyed within a month.

OTELLO (p. 76a).—A complete *Otello* would be a good possession, but only for those of us who know the opera from seeing it on the stage; for the last act, and many of the passages where Iago baits Othello, would not impress us otherwise. What, for example, would a gramophonist strange to the work make of that double bass solo which in the final scene carries Othello about the bed-chamber?

Perhaps we ought to ask first for complete records of operas of less intense characterisation or of more general familiarity. Every music lover in this country can know *Butterfly* in its every stage action, and the complete record commands a good sale; but the performances of *Otello* have been few; and now that Frank Mullings has partly retired from the stage, performances will be still more infrequent until his successor arises.

RECORDING OF PIANO TONE (p. 80c).—My Parlophone records of the singing of the Irmel Madrigal Ladies' Choir give out true piano tone—soft, round, and characteristic—on my H.M.V. gramophone with a medium-tone steel needle, the surface sound reducing itself to a minimum. The pianist has not much to do, of course, but I imagine he has a particularly delicate knowledge of how to project his sounds.

A FACT (p. 81c).—Compton Mackenzie, answering the letter of George Blake on "The Gramophone for Beginners," reminds us of a circumstance the importance of which cannot yet be determined: it is that "we have only had about three years of good music on the gramophone." Note first that the primary exclusive appeal to vulgar taste nearly ruined the industry, and secondly that the revision of policy, by which the appeal of the gramophone was extended to people of pure taste and lofty ideal, not only saved the industry, but made it a flourishing thing; furthermore, it made gramophonists of musicians. (The same experience will one day be told of broadcast music.)

GABRIEL FAURÉ (p. 82a).—I have never heard Fauré's music in gramophone recording, but, given perfect performance, it would reproduce as well as the clearer classical music.

IV.—AUGUST.

THE CONGRESS.—What struck me most forcibly was the general high spirits and average good will displayed by everyone concerned. I found that when an exhibitor and a visitor wanted to hear a quiet piece, the neighbouring exhibitors were not at all unwilling to close down for a few minutes.

But it appeared to me that there were two or three stall-holders who had brought with them only the loudest needles, the loudest records, the loudest instruments, and the one determination to "keep it up" all through the day; and it was these two or three who made the Central Hall the continuously noisy place it was on the 9th July. There were long moments when a Pat Collins Bank Holiday Fair, with two steam organs and many individual showmen of strident, inexhaustible voices, was by comparison a place of Wordsworthian peace. I stayed in the Hall for five hours; and then went with Mr. Balmain across to a Lyons café to eat the wonderful tupp'ny ices sold there, and (this is no exaggeration) the clatter of crocks on the serving counter, which hitherto had been a trouble to me, became now a blessed relief—a quietude, in which the conversation of an enthusiastic inventor was as restful as the gentle breeze in a field of wheat.

No doubt future congresses will see this one defect modified. Stalls cannot be made sound-proof, but a time-table for exhibitors could be drawn up, and perhaps a hall found which has a number of smaller rooms adjoining. (The Wesleyan Central Hall in Birmingham, for example, would be ideal: the main room is very large, and there are at the least twenty class-rooms opening on to the corridors.)

The Caxton Hall Tests were pleasant and interesting; but for

myself personally the most enjoyable feature of the day was the series of individual demonstrations which took place in the lecture-room adjoining the Hall which held the stalls.

RELEASING THE RECORD (p. 106d).—A literary note may be pardoned, even if it grew a trifle pedantic, could it only arrest the new use of the word *release*, against which the editor protests.

No doubt a cinema picture will always be "released," for the disease is in the film world chronic by now; but that is no reason why "this detestable expression" should not be isolated, in the way lepers, dangerous lunatics, and sufferers from all kinds of contagious but curable sicknesses are isolated. The idea of a noble piece of music in gramophone or player-piano form being released is quite as horrible as the idea of a Turner reproduction or a new edition of Thackeray being released; yet so miserably facile is this use of the word that gramophone and music roll companies have adopted it without question, and reviewers have allowed it. Mr. Mackenzie lets the thing poke its nose into this very review—on page 108, quarter-section *b*, though in a joking remark and with the protest of inverted commas. Perhaps THE GRAMOPHONE could refuse it a place in the literary pages, and request that advertisers avoid it.

It does not take long for a literary corruption to become immovable. The word "diction," in the sense of oratorical elocution and clear verbal articulation, has got itself fixed in the world of the Musical Competitions Festivals, and nothing will drive it out; and within the last ten years or so writers on musical matters apply it constantly, without question, to the art of singing. This lazy use of the word is not admitted into the dictionaries yet, which still define Diction as "wording and phrasing; verbal style; language; expression"; and no literary man or woman has probably used it in other than the right English manner, which is apparent in such a phrase as Coleridge's "It is difficult to determine whether the sense or the diction be the more absurd" (*Biographia Literaria*, chapter 2, footnote 1).

Of course, when the corruption fulfils a need, the usage becomes idiomatic: Coleridge tries to arrest the use of "scene" to indicate a landscape (*Biographia Literaria*, chapter 20, footnote 1), but this transference was more than a hundred years old in his day, and it is really useful. Not so *diction*; "N.P." (page 143d) could easily find a really living bit of English to convey what he wants to say in the phrase: "His tone is consistently pleasant, his diction and sense of rhythm excellent": nor this *released*, which justifies itself only in so far as it has inspired Mr. Mackenzie (page 107b) to his funny picture of the six released Beethoven symphonies of the Parlophone set at this moment running wild on Jethou . . . I can see him looking at them as they frisk about like young steers escaped from the stable, and murmuring one of the Lord Salisbury's lines in *Henry the Sixth*:

"Now, by what means got'st thou to be releas'd?"

RACHMANINOFF AND "THE" PRELUDE (p. 127d).—Mr. John F. Porte's philosophy is defective. The thousands of people who love the *Prelude in C sharp Minor* are not guilty thereby of "a deplorable display of ignorance of musical values"; on the contrary, they, like the millions who love Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, display a high regard for one good musical work at least, which is a valuable development in a sphere of life where good music is otherwise unknown. The demand for its performance by the composer was not an instance of "deplorable manners," but a natural curiosity to hear what the composer himself does with a piece handled, or malhandled, by most of the amateurs in the country. And as this interest, curiosity, and demand are not an expression of general critical judgment, seeing that the people concerned have no desire to make such an expression, there is in the matter nothing "insulting" to the composer.

BERLIOZ (p. 130a).—One piece of Berlioz' is (very fortunately) a most "hackneyed" composition; namely, the *Hungarian March* from *Faust*.

The Parlophone Company should provide a record of this composer's *Ophelia*. The Irmier Choir would render it to perfection. It is a short choral piece, for female voices, based on the narration in *Hamlet* of Ophelia's death.

LEON GOOSSENS (p. 135d).—I read with pleasure "N.P.'s" eulogy of Leon Goossens. He is indeed the equivalent of Kreisler on the oboe; likewise of Casals the 'cellist, Caruso the tenor, Lionel Tertis the violist, and so on.

Scattered here and there about the world are the supreme masters of solo and concerted orchestral instruments—hornists,

clarinetists, bass violists, flautists, trumpeters, trombonists, tubaists, drummers. Musical history contains records of such men in the past, and it tells us how the composers wrote music especially for them. What we want to-day are gramophone records made by the Leon Goossens and the Charles Drapers of the various instruments, so that we can learn the tone and character of each instrument under the most advantageous conditions.

SENSE OF THE "DRAMA" IN MUSIC (p. 107a).—Defining drama as the exposition of character and circumstances in conflict, we can say that all music is dramatic when it contains two ideas or subjects or moods of equal value, which work one against the other. The only other kinds are the lyric and the purely scientific: in the lyric there is only one main mood (e.g., the *Traume* of Schumann, the nocturnes of Chopin, etc.); in the scientific there is no emotion at all, but only a fine intellectual energy akin to that of the mathematician. There is very little of this kind in existence, the supreme example being Bach's *Art of Fugue*. Extreme modernists of the present day have tried to abolish feeling in music and to substitute pure design, which is akin to the intellectual and scientific; but I imagine we all try to find in their works that emotion or "poetry" which is the substance of normal art.

Music before Mozart and Beethoven was not dramatic, but lyrical, though the lyricism was not like that of the romantic composers of the early nineteenth century (I am speaking of instrumental music). The great Bach chaconne (Columbia, Lionel Tertis, referred to on page 108b) is lyrical in the earlier manner of music: it is a presentation of the various aspects and qualities of the poetic idea embodied in the theme which is announced in the beginning of the piece; and so its parallel in the art of verbal poetry would be the first dozen or so of the Shakespeare sonnets, through which one idea persists. If the lyricism of Schubert (in the short works), Schumann, Chopin, and their contemporaries, is as Keats and Shelley's, that of the pre-Beethoven composers is rather like the lyricism which fills such works as Milton's *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*.

Beethoven's "drama" is always internal, or spiritual: it is the conflict of ideas too immaterial to be stated in words. The first movement of the C minor symphony illustrates it to perfection—the conflicting protagonists are embodied in the first subject, a short, stern figure, and in the second subject, a lovely, flexible melody; and the dramatic field is the middle section of the movement. The entire drama, however, is worked out over the whole work, the last movement being the resolution of the first. Tchaikovsky's "drama" is more external; it is very nearly as programmatic as the tone-poems of Berlioz and Richard Strauss. Mid-way between the extremes of Beethoven and Tchaikovsky is the "drama" of César Franck.

Readers who want to understand this vital matter thoroughly should study the Beethoven C minor symphony, the Tchaikovsky *Pathétique*, and the Franck D minor, by the help of detailed literary expositions, plenty of which lie around in books and concert programme books. The Beethoven might be preceded by the Mozart symphony in G minor. The Franck might be followed by the Elgar in E flat.

If these works are too large, then the following might be substituted: Mozart, *Fantasia in C minor* (pianoforte); Beethoven, *Sonata Pathétique*, Op. 13 and the great trio in B flat, Op. 97; Liszt, *Sonata in B minor* (pianoforte); Franck, the *Violin Sonata*.

S. G.

(To be continued.)

* * *

The Duophone Competition

Whatever labours our July competition for twenty-five records (as suggested by Mr. George Blake and our Editor) may have entailed upon our readers will be doubled by the Duophone competition, first announced in the August number (page xiv). Fifty titles to form the basis of the new Duophone record catalogue are required. But fifty titles may involve only twenty-five records, and the prizes to the general public are worth winning; so we hope that a large proportion of our readers have responded to the invitation to compete, and that they have voted solidly for nothing but good music, which has not yet been recorded at all, or only in expensive editions. It is a great opportunity to help the Duophone Syndicate to strike out a new line which we all believe to be commercially as well as musically blessed.

National Gramophonic Society Notes

(All Communications should be addressed to the Hon. Secretary, N.G.S., 58, Frith Street, London, W.1.)

Retrospect

At the end of the first year of this Society's existence—Michaelmas—we shall look back with very warm feelings on the faith of those readers who joined at the first summons and paid their subscriptions before they even knew what works were going to be recorded or by whom or in what recording room. It was a splendid and startling faith, which on our side we have tried against considerable odds to justify. Thanks to those original members and their Bankers' Orders, we were able to secure the services of the Spencer Dyke String Quartet and to produce records of a quality which has satisfied the most exacting of amateurs at the modest price of five shillings each. It is perhaps hardly realised by readers of THE GRAMOPHONE who have not joined the Society that the records issued to members are, merely regarded as value for money, astonishingly good. Nothing of the same quality has been available to the public at less than seven and sixpence or eight and sixpence a record.

Our original members have been obliged to exercise patience all through the year, and even now require five records to complete the two dozen. These five will consist of the Brahms Sextet, but at the moment of writing these have not yet been heard or passed by the Committee. The works recorded are, therefore :—

Beethoven, <i>String Quartet in E flat, Op. 74</i> ..	3
Debussy, <i>String Quartet in G minor, Op. 10</i> ..	3
Schubert, <i>Piano Trio in E flat, Op. 100</i> ..	4½
Schönberg, <i>String Sextet, Verklärte Nacht</i> ..	3½
Beethoven, <i>String Quartet in F major, Op. 59, No. 1</i>	5
Brahms, <i>String Sextet in B flat major, Op. 18</i> ..	5
Total	24

It will be a matter of great regret to many members that this list omits the Mozart *Oboe Quartet in F major* (K.370) about which a good deal has been heard. Mr. Leon Goossens and Mr. Spencer Dyke have both passed the recording, but as these three ten-inch records are to be issued to members as the equivalent of two twelve-inch records, they must be held over to the first quarter of next year, since they would, if issued now, make the Brahms overlap into next season.

Membership

Now with regard to payment. Members who have sent bankers' orders have nothing further to do. They will receive the Mozart records as soon as possible after October 1st.

* * *

New members can join the Society for the *first year* (Michaelmas, 1924, to Michaelmas, 1925) as long as the supply of records holds out, on the following terms :—£3 10s. with application, on which they will receive the first fourteen records; £1 12s. 6d. on October 1st, £1 12s. 6d. on November 1st, when they will receive the other ten records.

* * *

New members wishing to join for the *Second Year*, beginning at Michaelmas, September 29th, 1925, may do so on the following terms :—

British Isles.—Either (i) in one payment of £6 15s. for the year; or (ii) in two half-yearly payments, £3 10s. on or before October 1st and £3 5s. on or before March 24th, 1926; or (iii) in monthly payments (16s. on or before October 1st and 11s. on the first of every succeeding month).

Overseas.—Either (i) in one payment of £7 10s. for the year or (ii) in half-yearly payments of £4 due on October 1st and of £3 10s. on March 24th, 1926.

Applicants for membership should make it perfectly clear at the outset by which method they wish to make their payments. The basis upon which the methods have been calculated is: Every member will pay 5s. annual subscription to the Society at the beginning of the year, Michaelmas. The twenty-four twelve-inch records or their equivalent cost 5s. each or £6.

Members in the British Isles pay 10s. a year for packing and postage; members Overseas pay 25s. a year for packing and freightage.

The Cobbett Record

New members may not be aware that the first three hundred members of the Society were presented with a record by Mr. W. W. Cobbett last Christmas. This record of the *Allegro* from Rubinstein's *Quartet in F, Op. 17, No. 3*, and of *The Declaration* from Raff's *Maid of the Mill Suite, Op. 192, No. 2*, was made by the Cobbett Quartet (W. W. Cobbett, Emily Keady, Susan Spain Dunk, and W. C. Hann) and has brought the Augustan patron of chamber music a deluge of appreciative letters from all over the world; members in New Zealand, Johannesburg, and Rhode Island, have lately added their thanks to the messages from nearer home. The Cobbett record would be bound to become a "collector's piece" in any case; but it gained a melancholy rarity owing to the death last March of that fine 'cellist, W. C. Hann. A few copies of it are still obtainable by members who were not fortunate enough to receive it as a present; and they will be sent post free in strict order of application to those who forward 5s. to the Hon. Secretary.

Walter Willson Cobbett

Mr. Cobbett himself is, as his photograph shows, a young man in everything but years, and the keenness with which he has helped the Society from the beginning by consenting to be on the Advisory Committee, by his magnificent Christmas present to our original members and recently (let it be whispered) by his leading a string quintet in the recording of Schubert's great *Quintet in C major*, is consistent with his unflagging enthusiasm for chamber music all his life. He initiated the "Phantasy" form—or rather revived the old English "Fancy"; he edited the Chamber Music supplement to the *Music Student* for years. His benefactions have been judicious as well as noble, and the Cobbett medal for services to the art of Chamber Music which was awarded, through the Worshipful Company of Musicians, to Thomas Dunhill in 1924 and, only the other day, to Mrs. Coolidge for 1925, is only one of many such graceful encouragements. At present he is engrossed in the vast preparation of the *Cyclopædia of Chamber Music*, for which, by the way, our Editor is going to write the article on chamber music for the gramophone.



W. W. COBBETT.

NOTES AND QUERIES

[Each comment or question should be written clearly on a separate slip of paper and addressed to THE GRAMOPHONE, 58, Frith Street, W. 1, as early as possible in the month. Full name and address must in all cases be given for reference.]

(341) **Fibre Needles.**—I am heartily in agreement with the tenor of the remarks re fibre needle tests in the June number. Tests for endurance, etc., are no doubt very interesting, but what do they lead to? I imagine that the ordinary gramophonist does not care much whether a fibre point plays once or twenty times, as long as it plays *once* properly. Personally I cut all points after one playing and do not find my needle bill excessive! Even with a doped fibre one never knows when the point will break down. I have found that Hall's undoped fibres will play through any record at least once and cannot detect much, if any, diminution of volume with them after using one of the "doped" variety. I obtained a Jewel sound-box in December on the recommendation of your piano record correspondent, and think that the tone is more like that of a *grand* piano than any other box. It is very sensitive, however, and requires a fibre needle for most piano records, as any forcible passage in the music causes it to clang on my (Sonora) instrument. It is also very lovely for chamber music with a medium needle. For difficult records of any description and for vocal and orchestral music generally I do not think, however, that any sound-box can approach the Astra.—G. R. H., Cheam.

(342) **An Experiment.**—Set four glass jam jars (2lb. size) on a table and place the gramophone upon them—mine is of the type known, I believe, as a table grand—in such wise that each corner rests on a jar, with the wooden knob or foot over the centre of the jars. One of the jars must be slightly lower than the others (by a fraction of an inch), so that the instrument touches only three jars at a time, the remaining corner being "in the air." Now adjust the position of the jars carefully, so that the main weight of the gramophone rests on two opposite jars only, between which it balances as nearly as possible. Set the instrument going, and there will result a striking increase in the volume of tone, due, I suppose, to the increased capacity for vibration of the sound-making mechanism; and, moreover, the sound will be found to expand into its component elements, so that (for instance) the various instruments in a symphonic piece can be more clearly distinguished than under ordinary conditions. At the same time the amount of "scratch" is not appreciably increased. The main essential appears to be the placing of the gramophone in a position of balance. The nearer this position is reached, the greater the improvement of tone. So far I have had no accident with the bottles!—H. H. E., Sanderstead.

(343) **Best Records.**—Could you give me particulars of the best Orchestral records of "Peer Gynt Suite (No. 1)" (Grieg), "Tannhäuser Overture" (Wagner), and "Orphée au Enfer Overture."—J. R., St. Helens.

(344) **Schumann Quintet.**—I would like to call your attention to a slight error in your Editor's article on Chamber Music on page 410 of the April issue. The Flonzaley Quartet record of the second movement of Schumann's "A major Quartet" is very much cut. There is an Odeon record of this number that is beautifully played and recorded. It occupies two sides of a 12in. record, the number of which is AA.79174, and is uncut.—H. G., New York.

(345) **Hawaiian Records.**—There are many very good guitar records on the market now. I have heard most of them and from these give the ones which I like the best. The first on my list is "The Song of the Volga Boatmen," played by Ferera and Franchini on Winner 1101. This is the best Hawaiian record sold. Turning over we find a waltz entitled "Kuckuck," played by a novelty orchestra. This is bright sparkling music every bar of which is enjoyable. The Gramophone Company have two very good numbers, "Moana Chimes" (B.1928) and "Pua Carnation" (B.815). Both of these are excellent. The best record in the Homochord catalogue is "On the Waikiki" (H.207). There are many plums on Columbia, but the best is "Hawaiian Medley," by the Toots Paka Company. On the reverse side is the now famous "Aloha Oe." A very good record is "Flower of Hawaii" on Actuelle. I cannot remember the number. All these records are worth having, but for the beginner I should recommend the "Song of the Volga Boatmen."—E. L. M., Co. Dublin.

(346) **Best Records.**—Can any of your readers tell me the best recording of (1) "Celeste Aida," (2) "Salve, Dimora."—L. N., Cardiff.

(347) **Appassionata Sonata.**—Is there any record of Beethoven's "Appassionata" Sonata, except Lamond's on H.M.V., the recording of which I do not think particularly good?—J. H. B., S.W. 14.

(348) **Andrea Chénier.**—Could any of your readers tell me where I am most likely to get the libretto of "Andrea Chénier" with Italian and English words? I have tried Riccordi, but they have not got one.—G. G. G., S.W. 20.



ANSWERS TO QUERIES

[Answers must be written on separate slips and should be forwarded to THE GRAMOPHONE, 58, Frith Street, London, W.1, as early in the month as possible.]

(284) **Records Wanted.**—Amato: D.B.146, D.B.156, D.K.107, D.K.126, D.K.110. Battistini: D.A.189, D.B.147, D.B.738, D.B.150. De Luca: D.B.217, D.A.190 (all H.M.V.). Stracciari: 7352 (Columbia). Any of the following Ancona records should be good; they are single-sided old Victor records, and the Victor Company will make special pressings for you, price \$1.00 (10in.), \$1.50 (12in.):—88170, 88081, 88169, 88062, 88056, 88063, 87015, 88055, 87014, 87006. The best baritone!—A. M. G. B., Knebworth.

(300) **Broken Records.**—The only satisfactory way to deal with a cracked or broken record is, in the interests of music, to throw it away.—R. W. B., S.W. 1.

(312) **Gramophone Covers.**—A leather or velvet turntable cover is not so good as baize. Your best plan is to buy a Beltona rubber mat and place it loose on the turntable. It can then be removed and shaken free of dust.—P. W.

(312) **Gramophone Covers.**—The ideal covering for a turntable is a Murdoch non-skid rubber mat. It provides a good grip, insulates the record, and does not retain dust. The price is: 12in. size, 3s.; 10in., 2s. 6d. The baize or plush covering should first be removed when fitting the rubber mat. It is quite unnecessary to fix it in any way by glue, etc.—D. W. C., Salisbury.

(326) **Carrie Tubb.**—H.M.V. C.447, fairly good ballad, "Valley of laughter" (Sanderson), the only one of her in the list, although old recording. Try that with a Columbia soft needle (which is really half-tone) for perfect recording of piano and voice. The reverse side is another artist equally good.—H. F. W., Chatham.

(331) **Violin Records.**—1, "Caprice Viennois," Op. 2 (Kreisler) and "Zigeunerweisen," Op. 20 (Sarasate), Col. 7362, 12in., purple label—Toscha Seidel. 2, 3, "Chaconne in four parts" (Bach), H.M.V. D.875-6, 12in., black label—Isolde Menges. 4, Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso, Op. 38, in two parts (Saint-Saëns), H.M.V. D.796, 12in., black label—William Primrose. 5, "La Ronde des Lutins" (Bazzini) and Scherzo "Tarantelle," Op. 16 (Wieniawski), H.M.V. D.B.290, 12in., red label—Jascha Heifetz. 6, 7, "Sonata in A, No. 2, in four parts" (Bach), H.M.V. D.939-40, 12in., black label—William Primrose. 8, "Golden Sonata for two violins," in two parts (Purcell), H.M.V. D.889, 12in., black label—Menges and Primrose. 9, 10, 11, 12, "Concerto in D, No. 4" (Mozart), in eight parts, H.M.V. D.B.815-818, 12in., red label—Fritz Kreisler and the Royal Albert Hall Orchestra.—D. W. C., Salisbury.

(332) **Mignon.**—The best record of "Io son Titania" ("Mignon") is, in my opinion, that recorded by Galli-Curci with "Nella Calma" ("Romeo et Juliette") on the reverse side—H.M.V. D.B.264, 12in., red label. Another excellent recording is Columbia A.5210, 12in., light blue label, by Eugenie Bronskaja with "Ombra leggera" ("Shadow Song") (Dinorah) on the reverse side.—D. W. C., Salisbury.

(339) **Virtz Sound-boxes.**—I have had long enough for thorough trial Virtz orchestral, string, vocal, and special soprano sound-boxes, and find all four excellent and admirable. Mr. Virtz tells me that he has "made a great success" of a new sound-box for piano; and, because of my satisfaction with his other sound-boxes, I have ordered that too!—D. W., Falmouth.

Analytical Notes and First Reviews

BEETHOVEN'S FOURTH CONCERTO.

VOCALION.—A.0237-40 (four 12in. records, 5s. 6d. each).—York Bowen (piano) with the Aeolian Orchestra conducted by Stanley Chapple: **Concerto No. 4 in G major, Op. 58, for piano and orchestra** (Beethoven). (G. and T. Eulenburg).

My first word must be one of hearty congratulation to the Vocalion Company on the production of their first concerto, on the fine recording of this, and on the fact that this work was chosen third in the Concerto Competition (January, page 287), a fact that possibly may have influenced the Company. If a big work can be well done so cheaply as this, then why—? But you can all finish that sentence!

To my thinking the *Fourth Concerto* is the most beautiful of all the piano concertos both in subject matter and in treatment.

First Movement. *Allegro Moderato*, Part I. (Miniature score, pages 1-18, bar 1).—The first theme, one of high romantic beauty, is given out by the soloist and continued by the orchestra, which goes on to the usual exposition of this and the second theme, in the minor key, which is constantly being pulled up short, first by bassoons, then by horns. After a return to a snatch of the opening tune the soloist strikes in with a lovely conversational interruption leading to a highly ornamented version of the main theme.

Part II. (Score, page 18, bar 1—page 39, bar 4).—This begins with an "episode" or third tune on the strings, with a solo bassoon, and then a clarinet continuing, while the piano chatters happily away to itself—a bit of writing most characteristic of its composer. Violin, then flute, then oboe and bassoon, whisper to each other the melody of the second theme above the constant rippling of the piano, who, it seems, is too bound up in itself to sing with them. When, after much trilling, the latter takes the centre of the stage it is to devise a new, entirely lovely, version of this same second tune. Only for a few bars, however, for the sternly inevitable process of development intervenes; the dreaming is rudely shattered.

Part III. (Score, page 39, bar 4—page 62, bar 1).—With much pomp the soloist now announces the recapitulation, elaborating his tune much more than at the start. This tendency continues until the end. This time the third, episodic, tune takes precedence of the second, a charming manipulation of form.

Part IV. (Score page 52, bar 1, to end of movement, page 63).—This part begins with the piano's pet version of the second tune and then we are plunged into the unnecessary, but apparently inevitable, *cadenza* in which Mr. York Bowen, who, so far, has earned our sincere admiration, shows disastrously how he can juggle with Beethoven's tunes. The result is mildly Chopinesque but quite out of the picture; though in the linking on to the final section Mr. Bowen reminds us he is a good creative artist. The end comes with a rush of scales and arpeggios for the piano.

Second Movement. *Andante con moto*. (Score, pages 69-73).—The form in which this movement is cast has no parallel in all Beethoven's music. In its strongly implied programme basis, no less than in its romantic phraseology, it is strangely anticipatory of what Schumann was to do later on. Several theories, more ingenious than convincing, have been advanced to account for the strong contrast between the orchestral and the piano parts. The first is clumsy, almost brutal, undoubtedly masculine; the second, feminine in its tenderness and delicacy. It breathes an exquisite soothing peace. So, as a programme, Orpheus taming the beasts has been suggested. Why not, if one must search for a clue, that famous piano lesson Theresa had with Beethoven? The fact is, however, that this wonderful movement needs no such prop, but like all its composer's music, rests secure upon the foundation of its own beauty.

Finale. *Rondo vivace*. Part I. (Score, page 74—page 99, bar 6).—The last movement starts off with a tiny rhythmic fragment which Beethoven will make much use of and goes on to a tune of Puck-like beauty. The piano unable to keep silence with such loveliness abroad gives us *his* version; then the orchestra adds a further fragment of tune to which the piano again delightedly responds. The two sport away together in a wholly charming

fashion. The next, the third, tune, is, it seems, intentionally and humorously crude, as if some capering Leprechaun had come dancing among the fauns. The clashing discords, when the orchestra joins in, do nothing to remove this impression. A seesaw of arpeggios, and a long chromatic swirl up, bring back the first tune again.

Part II. (Score, page 99, bar 6—page 120, bar 6).—Consists mostly of repetition of the previous material with, however, interesting development for the soloist of the first tune. Little touches of orchestral colour here and there should not pass by unnoticed.

Part III. (Score, page 120, bar 6, to the end of the movement).—The three tunes jostle each other closely but very beautifully at the start of this part and when the *cadenza* is reached it is, mercifully, very short and unobtrusive. A *presto* whirls the work to a gay conclusion.

The piano part is exceedingly well played by Mr. York Bowen. He evidently loves the music and his clean technique reveals it in the best light possible. Apart from that one *cadenza* his interpretation seems imaginative and poetical and always that of a well-equipped musician.

The recording, too, is very good except for the occasional coarseness of the wood-wind playing, but the balance between piano and orchestra and the actual piano tone, rather disappointing, as usual, in the slow movement, are worthy of high praise. If the music gave Beethoven anything like the joy in creation it does us in the hearing, he must indeed, during its birth, have been a happy man!

N. P.

ELGAR'S SECOND SYMPHONY

H.M.V., D. 1012 to 1017 (six 12in. records in album, 39s.).—Royal Albert Hall Orchestra, conducted by Sir Edward Elgar, O.M.—**Symphony No. 2 in E flat Op. 63** (Elgar).

Dr. Ernest Walker, in the later edition of his "History of Music in England," writes: "An altogether new Elgar has emerged since 1907, and in several respects his genius has markedly ripened. In orchestral music he has still, it is true, not surpassed in imaginativeness the *Variations* of 1899; but the later achievements in this field show in many ways an increased breadth of outlook with, occasionally, a touch of austerity seldom felt before." These words are a warning as well as a recommendation, and the man who is not prepared to take his music seriously will do well to leave this long-awaited recording of the *Second Symphony* severely alone. Shelley's words, "Rarely, rarely comest thou, spirit of delight," with which the composer prefaces his score, suggest that the vision of beauty here struggling for expression is one that can only be glimpsed after long seeking by arduous and intricate ways, and so indeed it turns out to be. That the prize to be won is well worth the labour of the winning there can be no doubt whatever, but it is necessary to warn readers that their path at first may not be easy.

They may perhaps be consoled to reflect that others have solved problems even more difficult than theirs. Of the composer's task I need say nothing; but the work of the players and the recording department must certainly be discussed. Let me say at once that all of them deserve well at our hands. The work is long and the writing for all the instruments extremely elaborate, yet nowhere have I discovered anything to find fault with in the playing. As to interpretation, the conductor is Elgar himself, so presumably the rendering may be accepted as authoritative and the partition of the work among the eleven sides as having the composer's sanction. There remains the recording, and here I can only say that my first impressions are very favourable. In so huge a score one does not expect that every instrument will be individually audible throughout; such clarity would be impossible, and perhaps undesirable too, even in the concert hall. What one does expect is a correct balance, a proper blending of the colours of the orchestral palette, with the important phrases standing out clearly, each with its own tone quality and with due regard for the proportions of the whole. And these things one gets. There may be details that are not beyond criticism; there are places, for instance, where the tone of the brass failed to satisfy me completely; but in a highly complex work occupying no less than eleven large sides

ORCHORSOL
C 8 and E 10
Gold & Silver Medals
Steinway Hall Test

ORCHORSOL
JUNIOR
Gold Medal
Caxton Hall Test

Why the ORCHORSOL consistently wins

ORCHORSOL JUNIOR for Fibre or Steel Needles

Solid Oak Cabinet, 12" high, 17" wide, 22½" deep, overall dimensions. Collaro Double Spring Motor, 12" Beaded Edge Turntable. Fitted with Orchorsol Patent Amplifier and Orchorsol Patent Tone Arm and Weight Adjustor - - £10

Tables to match, as illustrated, in Oak, £2.15.0, or with Jacobean twist-leg £3.5.0.

CARRIAGE PAID to any address in United Kingdom.

An ideal combination for Schools and Colleges.



First the Steinway Hall Test, where price was no criterion, the Orchorsol was placed first both by the independent judges *and* the audience, and was awarded the Gold and Silver medals.

Now the Caxton Hall Test, where the Orchorsol Junior at £10 carried all before it and was placed first in both tests and has been awarded the Gold Medal.

What is the reason for this unique record, a record unequalled by any other Gramophone in the world?

In a word it is that we hold the secret of creating the illusion that the music is *real*. It stands alone—free from any suggestion of the mechanism of its production.

The Orchorsol Tone Arm and Amplifier are patented articles that cannot be imitated or equalled in any other instrument. These patented features are standard in all our models and contribute to the production of that *natural* tone quality unique in Orchorsol Gramophones.

Each Orchorsol model is carefully made by hand, fitted with the best British Motor, and the cabinet work in figured Oak or selected, seasoned Mahogany sets a standard of sound construction and general excellence that is unequalled. In this feature alone the Orchorsol is always the best at the price. Apart from our overwhelming successes in competitive tests, apart from the tributes of musical experts we believe that individual conviction is even better and we are prepared to send any reader of "The Gramophone" any Orchorsol model on approval to try against any other instrument for seven days. If you are not convinced of its superiority we take it back without question, your only obligation being the cost of return carriage.

Let us send you particulars of all the ORCHORSOL MODELS and payment - out - of - income terms.

ORCHORSOL GRAMOPHONE CO

149, South Lambeth Road
London, S.W.8
(Brixton 223)

an occasional weakness is only a sign of human limitations, and I have no hesitation in offering my hearty congratulations to the experts of the Hayes recording department for having dealt faithfully and well with this noble music. There are, indeed, particular records that deserve even more emphatic commendation than this.

I give below the usual analysis. I am fully conscious of how bald this must appear to anyone with a grain of poetic feeling. But considerations of space compel me to limit myself very strictly to my proper function of showing readers the way. If I can conduct them safely through the garden they can be trusted to enjoy the flowers for themselves. It is a large garden and I have traversed none but the broadest paths; there are subtle connexions between many of these that I have not pointed out, there are sequestered ways from which I have turned aside. These the traveller must discover for himself.

Side 1.—This contains, roughly speaking, the exposition of the first movement, although the work is too closely knit to fall easily into the hard and fast sections into which the older symphonies fit so conveniently. The main subject is heard at the outset and special attention should be paid to the falling phrase in bar three, as this is the basis of much that is to follow. Another idea appears about a third of the way through the record (page 9 of the miniature score), after a climax, and is soon enriched by a flowing melody heard successively on wind and strings. A lovely solo for the 'cellos, derived from the falling phrase in the first subject, concludes this quiet section, which is followed by a long *crescendo* marked at its culminating point by a fine, broad phrase on the trumpets.

Side 2.—The development is full of picturesque effects, but it need not be dissected in detail. It will be sufficient to note the rhythmic phrase remarkable for its octave leaps, that figures so prominently in the first part (pages 22, *et seq.*), and the long 'cello tune with which this is presently associated.

Side 3.—The material here is the same as in side 1. There is plenty of variety in the presentation, but the themes appear in the same order as before. The *coda* is quite short.

Side 4.—The slow movement is, to my thinking, the most beautiful part of the symphony. The introduction creates at once an atmosphere of solemnity which is enhanced by the slow march-like tune that is soon heard on the brass. The second half of the side contains some lyrical moments in which the strings play the leading part.

Side 5.—A climax ushers in a new theme on the full orchestra. After this we soon return to the slow march of the preceding side given first on the wood-wind and then on the trombones against a counterpoint on the oboe and a delicate string accompaniment. The lyrical passage is heard again at the end of the side.

Side 6.—This is concerned principally with the theme heard at the beginning of side five, the march tune, and a very brief *coda* that is founded on the same idea as the introduction.

Sides 7 and 8.—The main subject of the *Scherzo* is the series of breathless phrases with which it begins (score-readers should look out for the repeat here). This is heard in more or less complete form six times over in the course of the movement. The episodes between the repetitions are occupied with various ideas, most of them in rhythms suggestive of a quick waltz and also of the first movement of the symphony. Besides this there are various allusions to the first movement, the most direct being near the beginning of side eight when first strings and then brass give out a full version of the 'cello melody heard in side two.

Side 9.—The easiest approach to the *Finale* is through its rhythms. The most important of these is that which opens the movement and may be written approximately — u — u u — —. This dominates the music for the first five pages of the score, after which its place is taken by — u — u — u. With this is associated a short but easily recognised theme in a different rhythm. Third (page 145, bar 6) comes a broad, typically Elgarian tune for the full orchestra which soon develops affinities with one of the ideas of the *Scherzo*. The rhythm, — — — u, is prominent here.

Side 10.—The development deals with the second, first, and third of the rhythms I have noted, in that order. The recapitulation is reached about an inch from the end of the record (page 165, bar 4).

Side 11.—The various subjects reappear so regularly as to make comment needless. A word must be said, however, about the lovely, reflective close of the symphony over which broods a

long-drawn-out version (page 180, bar 4) of the opening theme of the first movement, like a tranquil yet half-reluctant farewell.

The *Meditation* on the odd side is the introduction to an early oratorio of Elgar's. Those who desire an account of it will find one in Mr. Ernest Newman's "Elgar" (Music of the Master's series). It is interesting to compare it with the symphony, though the less mature work naturally suffers from the association. It is, however, a piece that is well worth recording, and this H.M.V. version is a distinctly good one.

P. P.

BACH'S VIOLIN CONCERTO IN E MAJOR

H.M.V.—D.B.789-91 (three 12in. records, 8s. 6d. each).—Jacques Thibaud (violin), with orch. acc.: *Concerto in E major* (Bach), five sides, and *Intrada—Adagio* (Desplantes, arr. Nachez), one side.

This concerto was probably written during the period (1717-23) when Bach was Kapellmeister to Prince Leopold of Anhalt-Cöthen. His duties during this time were connected with the Court rather than the Church, and we find him in consequence turning from cantatas and organ pieces to the secular forms of music and writing the French suites, the first half of the "forty-eight," the *Brandenburg Concertos*, and many other things, besides the delightful work before us here.

The orchestration of the concerto is exceedingly simple, the solo violin being accompanied only by a string band. Occasionally, indeed, Bach has not even bothered to write in the middle parts, contenting himself with the music for the solo instrument and the bass and leaving the rest to be supplied by the "continuo." Nowadays these middle parts are usually played by the strings, and this is certainly the most satisfactory plan; but the term "continuo" in the score referred to the part of the conductor, as we should now call him. It often consisted only of the melody and a figured bass from which he would fill in the gaps in the orchestral harmony *extempore* on the harpsichord or some other keyboard instrument.

The first movement occupies two sides, though musically it falls into three main sections. The compact principal subject, with its two contrasted phrases, is contained in the two opening bars, and the first two-thirds of the side are concerned with the full exposition of this material and some appropriate digressions. The second main section is in the nature of a development and takes us to about a third of the way through side two, the remainder of this side being an exact repetition of the first section.

While this movement suggests strength and buoyancy, the second is one of the most lovely reveries in which Bach ever indulged. The rhythmic subject given out by the lower strings at the start is continued all through in various shapes and keys, only resting now and then for a few bars to allow the 'cellos to breathe, as it were. It is this bass that binds the movement together; above it the soloist may safely trace his tireless series of expressive arabesques without any fear of the listener losing his bearings. The movement occupies two sides.

A single side suffices for the *Finale*. In form this is a *Rondo*, the tune at the beginning being repeated at intervals and the gaps filled by various episodes. In spirit it has that exhilarating combination of merriment, sanity, and strength which is the hallmark of John Sebastian in his lighter moods.

Thibaud is, I think, most successful in the first movement. In the second he is a little inclined to be sentimental at the expense of the rhythm, and he takes the *Finale* rather slowly for my taste, though here his rhythm is splendidly firm. The recording has caught his tone admirably and the reproduction of the lower strings is good, though I feel we might with advantage hear more of the orchestral violins; in the places where Thibaud is playing their modesty is somewhat excessive. There is, by the way, something seriously wrong with the bass part at the conclusion of the second movement (end of side four) in my pressing; but perhaps I have been unlucky.

The piece on the odd side would come appropriately enough before the *Concerto* and is well played and recorded.

P. P.

DOUSONA

The Novelty that
Caused the Sensation at the
GRAMOPHONE CONGRESS.

Awarded Silver Medal on its First
Appearance in Open Competition at the
Caxton Hall, July 9th, 1925.

DOUSONA Table Model.

DOUSONA

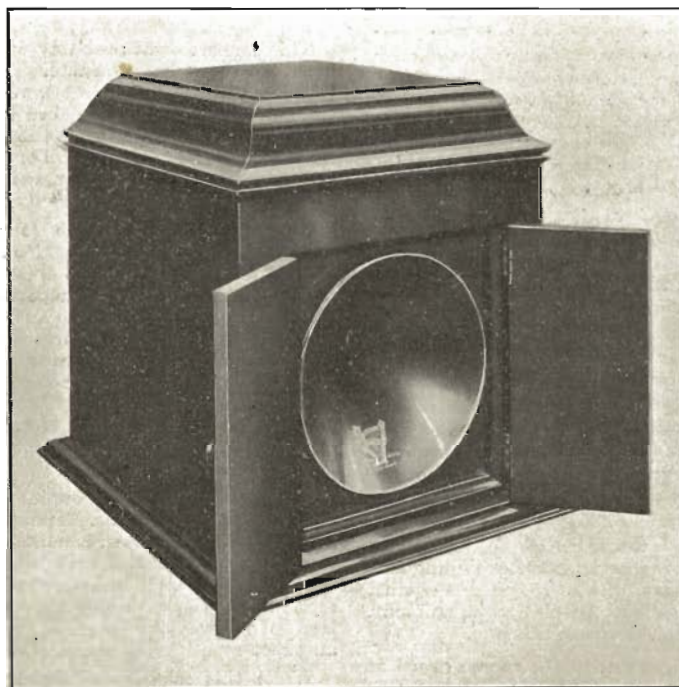
The only machine
with a cylindrical
**Wooden
Tone - Arm.**

□

The only machine
with a
**Floating
Amplifier,**
thus eliminating all
Sympathetic
Vibration,
Blurring & Blasting

□

**Garrard Motors
only.**



**Natural
Reproduction.**

□

Full Volume.

□

**Brilliant Forward
Diapason Tone.**

□

**Equally Effective
with Steel or
Fibre Needles.**

□

Height . 19½ inches.
Width . 18 "
Depth . 20½ "

Retail Prices { Oak . . . £7 7s.
 { Mahogany . £9 9s.

Extracts from *THE GRAMOPHONE*, August, 1925.

"I must congratulate **The Dousona** on its splendid debut." (Mr. Compton Mackenzie.)

"**The Dousona** is likely to become a household word in gramophone circles !!! **The Dousona** was a novelty and very welcome."

Test **The Dousona** before purchasing a gramophone. **Seven Days' Free Trial** given: if not satisfied your money will be returned, your only obligation being the cost of carriage.

**WE ARE THE SOLE MANUFACTURERS, NOT ASSEMBLERS ONLY, HENCE
THE EXTRAORDINARILY LOW PRICES WHICH DEFY COMPETITION.**

Write, 'phone, or wire for Catalogue, giving full particulars, to:—

Telephone:
Croydon,
669.

The DOUSONA Manufacturing Co. Ltd.
DUPPAS WORKS, CROYDON, SURREY.

Telegrams:
Dousona,
Croydon.

COLUMBIA

(September issues.)

- 3681 (10in., 3s.).—**Muriel Brunskill** (contralto): *Ilka blade o' grass* (Ballantyne and Wilson) and *Ca' the yowes to the knowes* (Burns' words). With orchestra.
- 3682 (10in., 3s.).—**Glanville Davies** (baritone): *Song of the Flea* (Moussorgsky) and *Silent Noon* (Vaughan Williams). With orchestra.
- 3692 (10in., 3s.).—**Mayer Gordon** (violin): *Serenade and Souvenir* (Drdla). With piano.
- X.324 (10in., 6s.).—**Riccardo Stracciari** (baritone): *Allor che tu from Tannhäuser* (Wagner) and *Serenata from The Damnation of Faust* (Berlioz). With orchestra.
- 9043 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—**Court Symphony Orchestra**: *Preludes to Acts 1 and 3 of La Traviata* (Verdi).
- 9044 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—**William Heseltine** (tenor): *How lovely are Thy dwellings* (Liddle) and *Come unto Me* (Coenen). With orchestra.
- 9046 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—**George Roth** ('cello): *Barcarolle from Tales of Hoffmann* (Offenbach) and *Angel's Serenade* (Braga).
- 9048 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—**Associated Glee Clubs of America**: *John Peel* (Andrews) and (augmented by audience of 4,000): *Adeste Fideles*.
- L.1646 (12in., 6s. 6d.).—**New Queen's Hall Light Orchestra** conducted by E. Goossens: *Selection from L'Enfant Prodigue* (Wormser, arr. Woodhouse). Parts 1 and 2.
- L.1647 (12in., 6s. 6d.).—**New Queen's Hall Light Orchestra**: *Selection from L'Enfant Prodigue* (Part 3) and *Meditation (Andante Religioso)* from *Thais* (Massenet).
- L.1650 (12in., 6s. 6d.).—**Hallé Orchestra** conducted by Hamilton Harty: *A Roman Carnival Overture* (Berlioz) (G. and T.).
- L.1657, 1658, 1659, and 1660 (12in., 6s. 6d. each).—**Lener String Quartet**: *Quartet in E flat, Op. 74* (Beethoven) (G. and T.).
- L.1664 (12in., 6s. 6d.).—**Miriam Licette and Frank Mullings**: *Letter Duet from Act 1 of Carmen* (Bizet).

We cannot, in these bustling days, too frequently refresh ourselves with the clean-drawn, cooling tunes that are found in such profusion among our own folk-songs. I use the term here to cover not only those melodies whose origins are quite unknown, but those which, perhaps coming to us from the seventeenth century or the eighteenth, have something to tell us of native life and aspirations before the industrial revolution almost wiped out the distinctive qualities of our country life. The two tender little Scots songs Miss Brunskill sings with real feeling are of the kind that I think most people of sentiment—not sentimentality—will be sure to find intimately eloquent. This singer is building up a name with the B.N.O.C., and we find her using her voice intelligently and interpreting the emotion in song on a high plane of feeling. It is not difficult, then, to prophesy good things for her, if this is her temper and this her insight. It is far easier to touch the hearer through song than most singers can ever be persuaded it is. But you must first yourself be moved. That inward emotion, if present, will surely make itself felt and will arouse a like emotion in the hearer. Listening to Arnold Dolmetsch showing forth the beauties of the tone of the viol d'amore, with its sympathetic strings, I thought how like is its case to that of the singer and his audience. The upper strings, played upon by the musician, arouse vibrations from the lower strings only if one touch them in perfect tune. A fractional movement of the finger, an error of judgment, and the lower string refuses to add its resonance, its increase of sweet tone to that of the upper. It will only respond when the bow strokes a justly stopped string above it. If the singer touch the note of sweet emotion truly, our response is sure, and the name of that instrument contains the clue to it all—"amore"; love for the music is the key that unlocks the door, as, in the end, love, and only love, will unlock all doors in the heart and life of man.

Moussorgsky's *Flea Song*, that not very delicate example of the satirical side of his art, was the first thing of his we knew in this country. It is not a very significant song. Mr. Davies puts into it a modest amount of satire, does not sacrifice vocal tone too much to realism in his laughter, and "gets it over" creditably enough. The words (in a slightly different form) will be found on

page 105 of the July issue. I prefer *Silent Noon* with the piano only. The phrasing in the middle—after "Deep in the sun-searched growths"—is not perfect. Otherwise the interpretation is fairly good, but not, I feel, perfectly imagined. I miss a convincing note of passion—of the tenderness of reminiscence—in it.

In two popular melodies Mr. Gordon plays with pure tone and good judgment. The piano is somewhat retiring.

Mephistopheles' serenade beneath Marguerite's window sounds a little solemn, as sung by Stracciari, and his satirical "Ha ha," which concludes each verse, and expresses the Devil's opinion of the poor dupes, has an air of being stuck on, not of forming a natural conclusion to the theme. The voice, of course, is competent, though I cannot find it superfine. The resonance does not quite please me, and the spirit does not sufficiently fully ooze out of anything this artist sings. The guitar accompaniment is quite well suggested. The other song is sung in Act 1 by Wolfram, who moves Tannhäuser, reluctant to rejoin the Landgrave and his companions after his defection to the charms of Venus, by telling him that Elizabeth's love had been awakened by the song Tannhäuser sang before he left the Wartburg. The erring *minnesinger* resolves to seek Elizabeth's favour again. The voice has little variety here, and its vibrato is not an advantage. We have the impression that he is taking the centre of the stage, and only singing to the house. This feeling of the artist's stepping out of the picture is only too frequently occurring when we listen to Italians; and the recent Covent Garden season proved again that their conceptions of their place in a homogenous art-work are extremely vague.

The Court Symphony Orchestra deals adequately with the Verdi extracts. These show forth his melodic gift, and the small importance which, at that period of his career, he attached to orchestration outside the laying out of the melody. There is much superficial tum-tumming in the other parts, that merely bear up the often remarkably expressive melodies, of which those in the two preludes are good examples.

Mr. Heseltine sings with expression, but unsteadily; and so long as he does so we cannot find unalloyed pleasure in his singing. It is curious how far behind the best public opinion the singer lags, in regard to this vice of tremolo—by far the worst from which singers of to-day suffer. The singer has ever been in the rear of progress, in every intellectual way. When is he (and she) going to wake up and determine to put away the foolishnesses that have so long been cherished as desirable things? The night is far spent, and still we cry "How long?"

Mr. Roth takes the *Barcarolle* at a nice pace, and phrases it nicely. His tone is a little bleaty and unvaried. It does not particularly appeal to me, but some may care for it more. The male voice records of the Associated Gleemen are, of course, of interest more from the curiosity point of view than from the artistic. They make a respectable noise, but purity of tone is obscured. There is a kind of hoarseness and some extraneous noise that gets in the way of the sound. The harmonisation of *O come, all ye faithful* is a dreadful example of how not to do it. These creepy-crawly chromatics are in the last degree deadly. The gallant 850 Gleemen hold their own quite easily against the 4,000 in this piece. Indeed, I should not have known, had I not looked at the label, that outside aid had been brought in to try and make the hymn go with a greater bang than before. The piano, even, holds its own against the whole gang. And how on earth did they get such a crowd to keep together, and not to lag perceptibly? The effect is not, as one might expect, overwhelming. The gramophone struggles in vain to amaze us with volume of sonority. It succeeds best in pleasing us by remembering the motto I saw on a clavichord recently: "Plus fait douceur que violence."

L'Enfant Prodigue was a pierrot play without words, produced in Paris thirty-five years ago. It contains some pleasant tunes, orchestrated with taste, most of which have become pretty well known in the concert-room suite that was made out of the music.

Parlophone gave us the Berlioz overture only last month. I said a word about the music then (August, page 142), and so need only remark here that the opening *cor anglais* solo is excellently done—about the best tone I have heard from this instrument in any record, I think—and that the wood-wind band in particular strikes me as being well balanced, and matching the strings in strength to a degree not often achieved. The whole thing is crystal-clear, and the only thing that I think is worth emphasising is that the volume and glitter of the music as we hear it in the concert-room simply cannot be got from any gramophone at present.


“The House for Miniature Scores”



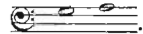
About Miniature Scores

NOT until the gramophone-lover comes to listen to orchestral music will he discover the full use and importance of the *Miniature Score*. But as the full orchestra is more intricate in character than the string quartet, it is necessary to give the reader some idea of its formation and composition.

The full orchestra is made up of four instrumental masses: (1) Strings, (2) Wood-wind instruments, (3) Brass instruments, (4) Percussion instruments.

The composition of the strings is the same as in the string quartet, but to these another instrument is added, i.e., the *double-bass* or *contrabasso*. This instrument furnishes with the violoncello the bass of the harmony demanded by the music.

The double-bass is usually tuned in fourths— the sounds being an octave lower than written. Its

upward compass is about to  or  which sound of course .

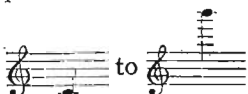

Rapid passages on the double-bass are as a rule ineffective. Double notes are very rarely used. Mutes (*sordini*) are seldom used for this instrument as their employment makes but little difference in tone. *Pizzicato* playing is very effective as it is on the violoncello.

Wood-wind Instruments.—The number of instruments in this department may vary considerably, as it does in the brass and percussion. So as not to confuse the reader, the orchestra used in Beethoven's *Leonore Overture*, No. 2, is taken here as a model for these three sections of the orchestra.

The *Wood-wind Instruments* used in this work are:—

- | | |
|-----------|--------------|
| 2 Flutes. | 2 Clarinets, |
| 2 Oboes. | 2 Bassoons. |

The Flute (*Ital.* Flauto; *Fr.* Flûte; *Ger.* Flöte).—This instrument has no reed and is played through a hole pierced in the side of the tube. The compass is from

 to  with all the chromatic intervals.

The easiest keys for the flute are those containing not more than three sharps or flats.

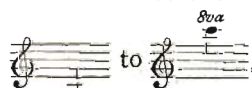


The lower register of the flute is sweet but not powerful, but the upper register on the contrary is piercing in quality. For this reason the highest notes in the score are usually given to the flute. Of all the wind instruments in the orchestra, the flute is the most agile. Rapid passages are easily played on it, and the *staccato* is eminently suited to it.

The Oboe (*Ger.* Hoboe; *Fr.* Hautbois).—This instrument is played by means of a “double reed” and its compass

is from  to  The oboe possesses


a complete chromatic scale and the easiest keys to play in are those which do not contain more than three sharps or flats. Most passages are easy to play on the oboe but the instrument is specially fitted to express sadness, tenderness, or jollity.

The Clarinet.—This instrument is played with a single reed, the tone produced being rounder and fuller than that of the oboe or flute. Its compass is from



 to  ^{*Sua*} but as the extreme upper register is shrill it is better not to go above .

Any passage written for clarinets in a key with four or five flats or sharps is difficult and therefore instruments are made of different pitch to be used for various keys.

The instruments employed in the orchestra are usually those in C, B flat, and A. The fingering in each case is exactly the same but as the length of the tube differs, the actual sound produced by a given fingering varies on the different instruments. The notes written for the clarinet in C sound as written; it is therefore what is called a “non-transposing” instrument like the violin for instance.

In other words, if the player on the C clarinet fingers for  it will sound that note.



On the B flat clarinet the same fingering will sound

, and on the A clarinet .

This applies to all other notes. The advantage of using differently keyed instruments is, therefore, that it is almost always possible to avoid the use of more than two sharps or flats. Each clarinet has, furthermore, its own individual quality and colour of tone. The C clarinet is rather hard especially in the upper register. The B clarinet has the most beautiful tone of any and the A clarinet is less brilliant than the one in B.

The clarinet is capable of the most varied range of expression. The *crescendo* and *diminuendo* are easily produced, and the *pianissimo* has a lovely effect. Beethoven uses the C clarinet for the *Leonore Overture*, No. 2.

The Bassoon (*Ital.* Fagotto; *Ger.* Fagott; *Fr.* Basson).—This instrument may be looked upon as the bass of the oboe as it is also played with a double reed.

Its compass is from  to  with all semi-

tones. The bassoon has two clefs, the F and the C, the latter being used (as with violoncello) for the top register to save too many ledger lines.

The easiest keys are those not containing more than three flats or sharps. Rapid passages are effective and fairly easy to play. The bassoon is often employed to reinforce the bass. Its tone resembles that of the violoncello, and for comic or grotesque effects it stands unrivalled in the orchestra.

Goodwin & Tabb (1924) Ltd.,
34, Percy Street, London, W.1.

ADVT.
(To be continued.)

We hear a sketch—a remarkably good one, here; that is all we ought to expect now, but not all, I hope, that we may look for in days to come. On its merits I strongly commend this performance.

Columbia prints, on the album in which the Beethoven comes, an analysis of the music, so I shall not add to that; nor compare the playing with that of the Spencer-Dyke Quartet on the now famous N.G.S. records.

That opening phrase, so eloquent and seminal, signs the work at once as by a master—and by one of two masters—Beethoven or Brahms. No other would have written it, I feel sure, but either of them might. What freedom of harmony there is in that first movement, what admirable ease of treatment of the themes! The composer is working with the glorious security of the master-craftsman, whose every stroke is a marvel of beauty. The 'cello is not quite strong enough, and the first violin, as usual, is a little too prominent. At the end of the first movement, for instance, his arpeggios rather overpower the other instruments.

That rhythm in the *Scherzo* never does seem to stick to 3/4 time all the way. Sooner or later, in every performance, comes the feeling of two in a bar—6/8. The Leners give us about the best start, rhythmically, I have heard; then, in the second line, when all the instruments are playing the same pattern, and there is no clear 1, 2, 3 rhythm in any part, the mind insists on 1, 2, with the divisions into three bits. Perhaps it is almost impossible, at the speed, to give the three-in-the-bar effect. The matter is not a big one, of course. The *Scherzo* ends on a chord of unsettlement—anticipation—and Beethoven directs the players to start the last movement immediately; so slip on the last record as quickly as possible, to get the full flavour of the dainty theme for variations that comes to round off the work in a delightfully easy and friendly way. Two sets of variations in one work is good measure; and when they are so ingratiatingly happy as are these in the *Finale* we are only sorry the measure is so short. For variety of matter one could choose few quartets to better this. If you want the deepest emotion in a slow movement you have to look elsewhere; but almost all joys are in this work—sufficient, certainly, to make it one to place among the familiar friends of one's collection. Each movement is complete on one record. The breaks occur in the first at the bottom line of page 7, bar 3; in the second at the first note of the last bar on the second line of page 16; in the *Scherzo* at page 23, end of line 3; and in the *Finale* at page 33, line 2, bar 4 (end of the third variation). All the repetitions are played, with the exception of the fourth and fifth pages (references to Eulenburg miniature score).

The *Carmen* duet occurs in the first act. Don José, immediately after his disturbing meeting with Carmen, receives from Micaela, a peasant girl, a letter from his mother. The gipsy girl's strange attraction is lifted from his mind for the time, and he sings of the pleasure of seeing his home and mother again. These singers are well matched in the simple music of pleasant sentiment.

K. K.

BRUNSWICK

(August issues.)

50056 (12in., 8s. 6d.).—**Michael Bohnen** (baritone), with orch.: *Invocation (O Isis) and Within this hallowed dwelling from The Magic Flute* (Mozart).

10102 (10in., 4s. 6d.).—**Marie Morrissey** (contralto) with string quartet and piano: *Just a-wearyin' for you and Coming Home*.

10164 (10in., 4s. 6d.).—**Willeen Willeke** ('cello): *Songs without words, Op. 12, No. 1* (Van Goens) and *Scotch Pastorale, Op. 130, No. 2* (Saenger).

Michael Bohnen is a magnificent singer, but, like so many operatic artists, he gives us his voice at full blast most of the time and none of the shading he would probably use on the stage. Another of those horrid wind accompaniments detracts further from one's pleasure in the record.

Miss Morrissey has a pleasant voice and an evident knowledge of effect, so that anyone who likes the types of song she has chosen will enjoy this record. I notice with awe that a composer unknown to me, Saenger, has here reached his op. 130; nevertheless his music is fresh and tuneful and both pieces on the record are well played by the 'cellist. One hopes that with such an excellent recording method as they possess the Brunswick Company will prove in their succeeding issues to be more ambitious.

N. P.

HIS MASTER'S VOICE

(September issues.)

D.A.644 (10in., 6s.).—**John McCormack** (tenor), with piano acc. and violin obbligato by Fritz Kreisler: *Morgen* (R. Strauss) and *Before my window* (Rachmaninoff).

D.A.347 (10in., 6s.).—**Titta Ruffo** (baritone), with orchestral acc.: *Sei morta ne la rita mia* (in Italian) (Costa) and *El perjurio* (in Spanish) (de Tijada).

D.A.634 (10in., 6s.).—**Frieda Hempel** (soprano), with piano acc.: *The Night Wind* (Farley) and *Wohin?* (Schubert).

D.B.765 (12in., 8s. 6d.).—**Dmitri Smirnov** (tenor) and **M. Kaidanoff** (bass), with orch. acc.: *Scene in the Monastery cell* (Boris Godounov, Act I.) (Moussorgsky).

E.396 (10in., 4s. 6d.).—**Leila Megane** (contralto), with piano acc.: *Dream in the Twilight* (R. Strauss) and *Death and the Maiden* (Schubert).

D.1022 (12in., 6s. 6d.).—**Eric Marshall** (baritone), with piano acc. and 'cello obbligato by Cedric Sharpe: *Hindoo Song* (Bemberg) and (with piano acc.) *The Wanderer* (Schubert).

B.2083 (10in., 3s.).—**Chief Os-Ke-Non-Ton** (baritone), with piano acc.: *Invocation to the Sun God* (Troyer) and *Payote Drinking Song* (Grunn), both sung in native dialect.

E.397 (10in., 4s. 6d.).—**Choir from the British National Opera Company** (unacc.): *God is a spirit* (Bennett) and *O Gladsome light* (Sullivan).

D.B.861 (12in., 8s. 6d.).—**Vladimir de Pachmann** (pianoforte): *Mazurka in A flat major, Op. 50, No. 2* (Chopin) and *Mazurka in B flat minor, Op. 24, No. 4* (Chopin).

The two most considerable works on the H.M.V. September list are Elgar's *Second Symphony* and Bach's *Violin Concerto in E*, both of which I have noticed elsewhere in the present number. Of the rest one may say generally that the recording is up to the high level one expects from the company and that occasionally it achieves a very exceptional excellence (see my remarks below). Also either my ear has become inoculated or else the surface noise is very much less than it used to be.

McCormack.—As far as I can judge from a very brief acquaintance this record is as fine, from every point of view, as anything that McCormack has done. Never has his phrasing been more perfect nor the sympathy between him and Kreisler more complete. Both songs are thoroughly worth while on the musical side, though I confess my own preference for *Morgen*. Here the vocal part is conceived as a kind of *obbligato* to the air on the violin. This air is played through in its entirety before the voice enters, and then repeated, while McCormack seems to be putting into words the idea latent within it. The simplicity of the whole thing is not the least of its charms.

Ruffo.—Titta Ruffo's singing is as fine a specimen of one style as McCormack's is of another. The music is of a much lighter order and it is sung with a complete *abandon* and lack of reserve. But though the volume of tone is enormous it never—or hardly ever—sounds forced. *El perjurio* does not please me as a song, but that is probably the fault of the orchestra, which may or may not be characteristically Spanish, but which is certainly disagreeable to me. This stricture does not apply to the other song.

Hempel.—Frieda Hempel's voice is probably in itself at least as beautiful as Gerhardt's, and we all know what a fine artist she can be. But her reading of *Wohin* is, to my thinking, completely eclipsed by the recent Gerhardt version. Indeed, Gerhardt's supremacy in Schubert is so universally acknowledged that one wonders why the company should issue this particular song again by any artist, however great. *The Night Wind* is rather short measure, even for a 10in. record; it suggests its subject effectively without being particularly original. The singing is good, but I failed to catch many of the words.

Smirnov and Kaidanoff.—This is a fine record that I can safely recommend to lovers of Moussorgsky's music. The characters are Pimen, the old monk (bass), busy with the last pages of his "chronicle," and Gregory, the novice, afterwards the Pretender, the "false Dimitri" (tenor). The evenly moving, tortuous phrase so often heard on the orchestra always suggests to me Pimen's laborious penmanship. Smirnov's fine voice is appropriately dramatic in such passages as the denunciation of Boris, which concludes the record, but he has some of the vices as well as the

virtues of a tenor and I find it hard to forgive him that long-drawn last note, which in the score is only a quaver. Kaidanoff's is a name with which I am not familiar, but he makes a splendid Pimen and I hope to hear more of him. The scene is considerably cut and the omission of the brief choral passages has deprived it of some rather welcome variety, but it impressed me none the less.

Leila Megane sings *Death and the Maiden* with conviction and without exaggeration. I do not feel that she has the same sympathy with the mood of the Strauss song, which sounds a little dull in consequence. The piano recording is, however, a redeeming feature.

Eric Marshall. The *Hindoo Song* (Bemberg's, be it noted, not Rimsky-Korsakov's) suits Eric Marshall, and he makes of it as good a record as I have heard of this. His style is still too operatic for Schubert, though he is obviously trying to restrain it. There are some low notes in the middle of this song, by the way, where the intonation is something less than perfect.

Os-Ke-Non-Ton has a good bass voice which he uses with unexpected sophistication. The music is effective if rather monotonous, but the piano part seems unnecessary. I suspect that there is little in the songs except the words that is of Red Indian origin.

The B.N.O.C. Choir.—The most remarkable thing about this record is the splendid reproduction which is sure to strike everyone. The singing is good, but perhaps not quite pure enough for sacred music. The compositions themselves are probably familiar to most people. Bennett and Sullivan are honourable names that stand out in a rather drab period for British music; their music for chorus, while sharing some of the weakness of a barren age, is notably superior to that of their contemporaries.

Pachmann.—Even if Pachmann is no longer what he was in his best days he still holds a unique position as an interpreter of Chopin and his rendering of these two charming *Mazurkas* is as imaginative and refined as any critic could wish. I am very glad he doesn't talk. Once again the recording is of exceptional interest, far surpassing all but the most recent issues of piano music. The characteristic singing tone of the instrument has been properly reproduced at last and the *pianissimo* passages are superb, though there is still a "tinniness" noticeable occasionally, especially in the loud sections.

(Midsummer list.)

- D.B.853 (12in., 8s. 6d.).—*Alfred Cortot* (piano): *Ballade in G minor, Op. 23* (Chopin) and *Impromptu in F sharp, Op. 36* (Chopin).
- D.A.693 (10in., 6s.).—*John McCormack* (tenor), with orch. acc.: *When you and I were seventeen* (Rosoff) and *I look into your garden* (Haydn Wood).
- D.A.692 (10in., 6s.).—*John McCormack* (tenor), with orch. acc.: *The sweetest call* (Morrow) and *Devotion* (Haydn Wood).
- D.A.694 (10in., 6s.).—*Armand Crabbe* (baritone), with orch. acc.: *Canción montañesa (Allá sobre la nieve)* (Doret) and *La canción del Olvido (Junto al puente de la Pena)* (Surrano).
- E.392 (10in., 4s. 6d.).—*Lambert Murphy*, with orch. acc.: *One little dream of love* (Gordon) and *Richard Crooks*, with orch. acc.: *In the wee little home I love* (O'Hara).
- E.393 (10in., 4s. 6d.).—*Richard Crooks*, with orch. acc.: *The green hills of Ireland* (del Riego) and *Sacrament* (MacDermid).
- B.2045 (10in., 3s.).—*Rhondda Welsh Glee Singers*, with piano acc.: *March of the Men of Harlech* (old Welsh) and *Hen Wlad Fy Nhadau* (Land of my Fathers).
- B.2058 (10in., 3s.).—*Rhondda Welsh Glee Singers*, with piano acc.: *Y Delyn Aur* and *Gipsy Laughing Chorus* (Bell).
- B.2049 (10in., 3s.).—*Trinity Choir*, unacc.: *Come, Thou Almighty King* (Giordani) and *Apollo Choir*, unacc.: *As torrents in summer* (Elgar).

These records remain to be reviewed from last month. Few of them are of great value musically, but the very exceptional excellence of the recordings make it impossible to pass them over.

The *Impromptu* played by Cortot is complete, but of the *Ballade* (miscalled *Ballad* on the label) we have for some reason only the second half, the music thus starting in A major and ending in G minor. The playing in both cases is Cortot at his very best, and I say this though I am quite aware that he plays a few wrong

notes. There is one place early in the record of the *Ballade* where the left hand is too loud for the right, but I am inclined to attribute this more to the reproduction than to the playing. The recording is deeply interesting. In *pianissimo* it is almost perfect (especially where the music is in the high register) the runs are splendidly clear, the singing tone is often excellent, and even the *fortissimo* passages are frequently successful. But the high level is not consistently maintained; one listens with perfect satisfaction for a while and then suddenly come two or three notes or even a longer section where the effect is quite definitely bad. Curious this; perhaps some reader will write and explain it.

None of McCormack's four songs are important musically, though his singing is as fine as ever and the recording again very remarkable. The effect in a small room was rather overwhelming on my Pleated Diaphragm, so I retired to my bedroom, from which it sounded much better. In three of the songs my pleasure was marred somewhat by the rawness of the orchestral part, but this defect was less noticeable in *I look into your garden*. The voice of Armand Crabbe can be very loud indeed, but unlike some other singers he uses it discreetly and he produces at least one lovely soft effect in his record. The songs are in the popular Spanish style and quite attractive. Songs by Lambert Murphy and Richard Crooks are mainly noteworthy for the recording. The Rhondda Welsh Glee Singers are very well drilled, and they sing with spirit. On the records there is considerable roughness (not in the rendering but in the quality of the tone) though whether this is due to the voices or to some mechanical cause I cannot say. I am sorry that the tune of the chorus part of *Land of my Fathers* is so obscured by the counterpoint; I should have liked to hear it more plainly. But I have no other complaint and the records are among those to which I would direct readers' attention. The Trinity Choir sing a familiar hymn adequately, though the words are not too clear, and the *Apollo Choir* a simple Elgar part-song in which I couldn't hear the words at all.

P. P.

PARLOPHONE

(September issues.)

All 12in., 4s. 6d. each.

- E.10343 and 10344.—*Opera House Orchestra* conducted by E. Moerike: *Mastersingers of Nuremberg Overture* and *Dance of the Apprentices* from Act III. of the opera (Wagner).
- E.10345.—*Opera House Orchestra* conducted by E. Moerike: *Marche Hongroise* and *Dance of the Sylphs* from *The Damnation of Faust* (Berlioz).
- E.10346.—*Opera House Orchestra* conducted by Bruno Weyersberg: *Poet and Peasant Overture* (Suppé).
- E.10350.—*Robert Howe* (baritone): *Down Zummerzset Way* (Sterndale Bennett) and *The Song of the Waggoner* (Breville Smith). With orchestra.
- E.10351.—*Emmy Heckmann-Bettendorf* (soprano): *Einsam in trüben tagen* (Elsa's dream) and *Euch Lüften, die mein Klagen* from *Lohengrin* (Wagner).
- E.10352.—*Lauritz Melchior* (tenor): *Winterstürme wichen dem Wonnemond* from *The Valkyrie* and *Nur eine Waffe taugt* from *Parsifal* (Wagner).

There are several points to like in the overture—the right pace, the solidity of the playing, the pointed fiddling, the conveyal of the atmosphere of the burgher-musicians' music-makings, with its mixture of high art and plain (rather stodgy) thinking. The wood-wind, however, does not come off very well when, as in the passage beginning on page 29 (on the second side of the first record) it is heard alone. There is a thinness and a lack of characteristic tone in the reeds that I think Parlophone ought to work at. This would be a first-class recording if that department were richer, and the brass perhaps a little less tubby.

The breaks are: End of first side, first bar of page 21 (Eulenburg miniature score); end of record 10343, first bar of page 38.

The *Dance of the Apprentices*, a re-issue of an earlier record, comes off with a capital swirl. The bustle and good-humoured horseplay of the lads is suggested in the first section, and then the dance, still a little clodhopping, is played with virility, if rather roughly as regards the brass. The Parlophone bulletin says something about the setting of all these records, to which I refer readers. It is no wonder that the fiery Hungarians, when they first

heard the Rakoczy March, spoilt its very original ending by bursting into frantic applause before the close. It is a magnificently jaunty, high-stepping tune, and that exciting working-up at the finish is the sort of thing to put on when you want rousing to action. The brass is rather unusually good in this record. The last chord does not depart very satisfactorily, though.

The other side is a splendid contrast, showing another aspect of the orchestrator's genius. Strings, wind, and harp draw the daintiest picture of the fairy creatures. The surface noise, though not excessive, is felt as a hindrance here. The playing is excellently sensitive.

The good old *Poet and Peasant* is respectably done. The opening is rather stiff and starchy. The solo has the right touch of sentimentality, just enough and not too much. The second side brings the commotion, to which I always put imaginary cinema pictures of cowboys. The wood-wind is a little shrieky here. Follows the celebrated valse. There is certainly plenty of variety in the overture, which will probably long keep its place in the theatre and film house.

The Sterndale Bennett who wrote *Down Zimmerzet Way* is, of course, not Sir William, the Victorian, but (I believe) a grandson. This is a good robust ditty, which Mr. Howe sings thoroughly well. He has a capital voice for such things, and knows how to tell his story. He makes both songs go with a swing. *Elsa's Dream* has several times been recorded, but not, I think, better than here. The singer's smooth, sustained tone is admirably suited to the theme of the innocent maiden, standing before her king, amazed by the charge of causing her brother's death, and recollecting, as in a trance, her dream of the coming of a knight in armour, who is to be her champion and to defend her name. In the other scene, Elsa, in the peace of the night, sings her gratitude for the deliverance from evil (the theme of Lohengrin is heard in the violins in a momentary interlude), and her delight at the joy that is to be hers in the morning, when she is to wed the knight.

Apart from one or two high notes, in which, on my copy, there is a little harshness, the reproduction is clear and pure, as is the singing. I think this is the first record I have heard of this scene. The Parlophone Company is thus adding to its and our store of unbackneyed Wagner extracts most agreeably.

Mr. Melchior is, as ever, fervent and clean-cut in his air—the *Spring Song* of Siegmund, with which he greets the glorious night, after the discovery of his love for Sieglinde. In his celebration of the reawakening of spring's forces after Winter's sleep the hero symbolises the birth of his love. One or two high notes blast here. I think Mr. Melchior uses too heavy a tone on them. I like his earnestness, though I cannot greatly delight in his tone, which has a roughness and volume that do not suit many songs, and that he appears unable quite to subdue to mild proportions. The *Parsifal* extract has some commendable orchestral playing, which I personally enjoy more than the singing, in this case.

K. K.

VOCALION

(September issues.)

- A.0236 (12in., 5s. 6d.).—Luella Paikin (soprano): *Lo! here the gentle lark* and *La Capinera* (Julius Benedict).
 K.05183 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Ethel Hook (contralto), with orch. acc.: *Abide with me* (Liddle) and *The Lost Chord* (Sullivan).
 K.05186 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Horace Stevens (bass-baritone): (a) *O that 'twere possible*; (b) *O let the solid ground*; (c) *Go not, happy day*, from *Cycle of Songs*, Tennyson's "Maud"; and *A voice from the Cedar Tree* (A. Somervell).
 K.05187 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Howard Bliss ('cello): *Larghetto* (Handel, arr. Willeke) and *Arioso* (Bach).
 X.9610 (10in., 3s.).—Malcolm McEachern (bass): *Myself when young* from *In a Persian garden* (Liza Lehmann) and *The Fishermen of England* from *The Rebel Maid* (Montague Phillips).
 X.9611 (10in., 3s.).—Albert Sammons (violin): *From the Canebrake, Op. 5, No. 1* (Samuel Gardner) and *Slavische Tanzweisen, No. 1* (Dvorák-Kreisler).

In spite of signs of nervousness Luella Paikin has made a very pleasing record of her charming voice. She is more at ease with the Italian fireworks than with Bishop's beautiful gargle, but both are rendered very musically and smoothly. The flute is exceedingly well played by an unnamed artist.

Miss Hook provides a good bit of Coliseum singing with the excellent diction expected of a music hall artiste. *O si sic omnes!* De Groot's record of the same pieces may amusingly be compared with this one.

Horace Stevens' record is one of the best and most musicianly vocal records I have heard for a long while and I confidently recommend it to those who care for fine singing, interpretation, and, last but by no means least, fine songs. Arthur Somervell's setting of some of Tennyson's "Maud" poems is, after all, one of the landmarks of modern English song; possessing its best characteristics of tunefulness, singableness, good construction, and sincere feeling. After the moving little *Oh that 'twere possible* comes the vigorous *O let the solid ground*, sung in just the right dynamic way: then the rhythmic *Go not happy day*, with its charmingly extended last phrase. On the reverse is the longer song, *A voice from the cedar tree*, in which Mr. Stevens shows us he understands the usages of tone-colour. Notice the change of colour at the words "Maud, with her exquisite voice." Fine recording this, too. Howard Bliss has chosen an adaptation for 'cello of the *Larghetto* (third movement) of Handel's *Violin Sonata in D*, which transfers successfully to the lower-pitched instrument. The arranger, as is the way of such, cheerfully alters Handel's ending so as to make a repeat possible! The Bach *Arioso* on the back, the origin of which is unknown to me, I quite frankly found dull. The master must have written it on one of his "off" days, when perhaps a pupil, or his congregation, had proved tiresome. Mr. Bliss produces pleasant tone and his musicianship is always to the fore.

I am still lost in admiration of Malcolm McEachern's booming low E flat in Liza Lehman's song, but I wish he didn't give the impression of singing with a tight jaw. It may only be a peculiarity of diction.

The Fishermen of England has been recorded before (by Peter Dawson, I think). It is an excellent example of its type and most pleasant to listen to.

Albert Sammons plays some rather sophisticated jazz and a Dvorák dance in such a way as to make one wish he would expend his great gifts on worthier material. The record, however, is a nice one.

The recording throughout this list is on a high level of excellence.

I much regret that Mr. Roy Henderson's record (K 05185, 12 in.) of *Adamastor, roi des vagues profondes* from *L'Africana* and *Woo thou thy Snowflake* from Sullivan's *Ivanhoe* reached me in the country too badly broken for playing.

N. P.

Miscellaneous Reviews

- BELTONE.—5019 (12in., 4s.).—Edward Halland (bass): *The Watchman* (W. H. Squire), with piano acc., and *Richard Walters* (tenor) and *Edward Sangster* (baritone): *The Moon hath raised her lamp* above from *Lily of Killarney* (Benedict), with orch. acc.
 BRUNSWICK.—2783 (10in., 3s.).—Paul Ash and his *Granada Orchestra*: *Meditation* from *Thais* (Massenet) and *Caprice Viennois* (Kreisler).
 BRUNSWICK.—2825 (10in., 3s.).—Rudy Wiedoeft (saxophone solo): *Saxarella* (Wiedoeft) and *Danse Hongroise* (Ring-Hager). Piano, Frank Banta.
 COLUMBIA.—3691 (10in., 3s.).—J. H. Squire *Celeste Octet*: *Two Eyes of Grey* (McGeoch) and *I love the Moon* (Paul Rubens).
 COLUMBIA.—3693 (10in., 3s.).—Vivian Foster (the "Vicar of Mirth"): *The Parson talks about Marriage*.
 COLUMBIA.—3700 (10in., 3s.).—Jean Lensen and his *Orchestra*: *Ideale* (Tosti) and *Love's last day* (Benatzky).
 COLUMBIA.—3705 (10in., 3s.).—The *Columbia Sketch Company*: *A Day at Scarborough* (H. C. Ridout) and *Off by the "Flying Scotsman"* (H. C. Ridout and J. R. Hind).

H.M.V.—C.1214 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—**Mayfair Orchestra**: Tell me more Selection (Gershwin).

H.M.V.—B.2070 (10in., 3s.).—**Alice Delysia** (soprano): That means nothing to me and Poor little rich girl from On with the dance.

H.M.V.—B.2071 (10in., 3s.).—**Cyril Newton** (tenor): I want a girl like Peggy O'Neil and I'll see you in my dreams.

H.M.V.—B.2081 (10in., 3s.).—**Imre Magyari** and his Tzigane Orchestra: Kesergo (Radies) and Hungarian Dance (Brahms).

H.M.V.—B.2082 (10in., 3s.).—**Imre Magyari** and his Tzigane Orchestra Hungarian Song (Bela) and Hungarian Folk Music (Balázs).

VOCALION—X.9569 (10in., 3s.).—**Alfred Cammeyer** (Vibrante Zither Banjo): A Winter's Tale and Valse Penchant (Cammeyer).

VOCALION—X.9612 (10in., 3s.).—**Moschetto** and his Orchestra: Yamschik (Leonard-Morelli) and Chanson Indoue (Rimsky-Korsakov).

VOCALION—X.9613 (10in., 3s.).—**Moschetto** and his Orchestra: Canta il grillo (Billi) and Le Tango du Rêve (Malderen).

VOCALION—X.9615 (10in., 3s.).—**Ferrera and Franchini**: Silver Sands of Waikiki (Smolew-Russo) and Wonder why I love you (Yates-Bray).

The Beltona record (for August) is impressive and will not disappoint those who want to have versions of these old favourites.

The Brunswicks, also August issues, come from America, to which we owe a lot. I wish we could pay our debts in this coin. Paul Ash with fiendish skill has completely devastated my sentimental (war-time) affection for two lovely things—syncopated *Meditation* and *Caprice Viennois*. Aaaah! Take it away. But very neatly murdered, all the same. Wiedoeft is brilliant too—if you like saxophone solos.

Of the Columbias (September issues), the *Céleste* Octet and Jean Lensen records are well up to standard, and the melodies chosen have still a wide appeal. After all, there is a soup course in every full menu, and a great many families live on little else. Vivian Foster is as amusing as ever, and as marvellously clear, in his marriage record. Whether anyone is justified in putting such humour into the mouth of a clergyman is another matter. Personally, it makes me feel uncomfortable, and I think Mr. Foster could be just as funny without the undercurrent of throwing mud at the church. But this is a biased view, and there's no doubt that he is funny.

Our good friend Mr. Ridout, of the Columbia Company, has evidently had a noisy holiday, and the Columbia Sketch Company (which reminds me much of the famous *'Arry and Family at the Zoo* on Zono. 1553) contrived to make me hot all over trying to disentangle the babel of voices and music at Scarborough. As descriptive pieces they are excellent, but there's not the humour of, for instance, a Harry Tate record.

The H.M.V. midmonth records are not remarkable, except for the *Tell me more Selection*, which is extremely good and spirited—apparently the new recording, as is also the Cyril Newton record. When I saw *On with the dance* some time ago, I thought that Delysia was very clever in her interpretation of the two wretched songs which she has recorded; but, of course, Ivor Novello's tune for *Poor little rich girl* is good enough. Only without the *mise en scène* and the personality and with the rather baffling diction the record seems ineffective. I did not hear the Hungarian band under Imre Magyari at the Pavilion, and imagine that something is lost of life and colour in the recording; but it is weird and interesting music, and will appeal to a great many people. There are not many Tzigane records, I think.

The Vocalions (September) include two old favourites—both, I think, at the top of their form and one newcomer, Moschetto, who delights the frequenters of the Savoy Hotel by his solo playing and by the ensemble of his orchestra. I am not sure that these records are quite worthy of him, but on the other hand I am sure that I, for one, must keep both of them and shall often play them. *Le tango du Rêve* delights me most of the four tunes.

PEPPERING.

BAND RECORDS

ACO—G.15724 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—**Scottish Co-Operative Wholesale Society Brass Band**: Entry of the Gladiators (Julius Fučík) and The Nightingale (Harold Moss) (cornet soloist, Mr. W. L. Crozier).

ACO—G.15725 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—**Scottish Co-Operative Wholesale Society Brass Band**: Echoes of Scotland (arr. W. Rimmer). Parts 1 and 2.

BELTONA—810 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—**Beltona Military Band**: Hiawatha Selection (Coleridge-Taylor). Parts 1 and 2.

COLUMBIA—9042 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—**Band of H.M. Grenadier Guards**: Selection of Wilfred Sanderson's Songs (arr. J. Ord Hume). Parts 1 and 2.

H.M.V.—C.1207 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—**Band of H.M. Royal Air Force**: The Valkyrie Selection (Wagner). Parts 1 and 2.

VOCALION—K.05182 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—**Band of H.M. Life Guards**: La Bohème Selection (Puccini). Parts 1 and 2.

ZONOPHONE—2584 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—**Black Diamonds Band**: Songs of Long Ago (arr. R. Howgill). Parts 1 and 2.

Records by artists new to the recording room are always interesting and so far as I am able to judge from my copies, which were badly cracked in transit, the Scottish Co-Operative Wholesale Society Band has made a very successful début. The band is under the direction of Mr. J. A. Greenwood, whose reputation in brass band circles is a sufficient guarantee of good workmanship and careful interpretation. The tone and balance are good and the recording is excellent. Full justice is done to Rimmer's *Echoes of Scotland* and Fučík's *Entry of the Gladiators*, both of which are old favourites, and in *The Nightingale* Mr. Crozier gives an exhibition of clean tonguing and good tone, a combination which is not always found in cornet soloists.

The *Hiawatha Suite* is music with which I am quite out of sympathy, but in this selection both playing and recording are good and, although from the same matrix, this issue is a distinctly better pressing than the recent Aco record.

The *Selection of Wilfred Sanderson's Songs* is sure to be a "best-seller." It is very well played and full of deservedly well-known tunes. At first hearing this record sounded rather harsh, but this is a common fault in a new record and by the time it had been played three or four times the tone was much sweeter and the harshness had quite disappeared.

The first record to be issued of the four selections from Wagner's *Ring* to which I referred last month is *The Valkyrie*. The first side includes the motifs of Sieglinde and Hunding, part of *Siegmund's Greeting to Spring* and concludes with an excerpt from the famous *Ride of the Valkyries*, while the second side is wholly occupied by the *Magic Fire Music* except for a short enunciation of the Siegfried motif at the beginning. The record is quite up to my expectations except for one blemish which, however, is so serious as to make one wish that the Gramophone Company had decided to defer the issue of this record until they had found time to re-record the first side in order to get a better balance in *The Ride of the Valkyries*. The galloping figure in the brass can hardly be heard for the accompaniment in the reeds which is much too prominent—at any rate until the entry of the bass trombone. Apart from this the recording is very good and the only faults I have to find with the playing are that the "Ride" is hardly as exhilarating as it might be, and that the tubaphone (or other bell-like instrument) used towards the end of the *Fire Music* is a trifle out of pitch with the rest of the instruments.

The Life Guards Band has made a splendid record of the selection from *La Bohème* in which the tone is as full and mellow as one has come to expect, nowadays, from this band. The recording is quite free from blemish and the cornets and clarinets come out particularly well. The selection consists of all the best known airs from this popular opera and the voice parts are neatly arranged, but I do not like all the tricks played with the tempo of the famous waltz-song.

The new Black Diamonds Band record is a pot-pourri of good old songs, most of which many of us will remember in the Scottish Students' Song Book. The first time I tried over this record was in the presence of a friend who did not know what I was going to put on, and the immediate effect was that we simultaneously burst into song! (Neither of us could remember all the words, but that didn't matter.) It is just the sort of thing to play at breakfast time on a wet and foggy morning.

W. A. C.

DANCE NOTES

By Richard Herbert

THIS month I am prevented, unfortunately, from doing more than list the records and indicate, as well as I am able, their relative merits. The names of the best records are printed in denser type, the others are starred according to their deserts. All are fox-trots unless otherwise mentioned. The totals this month are: Waltzes, 14; one-steps, 2; and fox-trots, 80.

BRUNSWICK (10in., 3s.).—

- 2794.—*Familiar Italian Folk Songs and Old Familiar Melodies* (both piano duets, waltzes, played by Phil Ohman and Victor Arden; vibraphone by Joseph Green).
- 2798.—****Hello Tucky!** and ***I ain't got nobody to love** (both played by Bennie Krueger's Orchestra).
- 2800.—***Sad** (vocal chorus) and ****Shimmy** (both played by Vic Meyers and his Orchestra).
- 2801.—****Tell her in the Springtime** and **When you and I were dancing** (vocal chorus) (both played by Carl Fenton's Orchestra).
- 2814.—**You and I** and ****Me Neenya** (both played by Ray Miller and his Orchestra).
- 2818.—***Jacksonville Gal** and ***Mishawaka Blues** (both played by the Cotton Pickers. Slow fox-trots).
- 2823.—**On the way to Monterey** and **That's my girl** (both played by Ray Miller and his Orchestra). *That's my girl* is played almost in one-step time.
- 2824.—***One stolen kiss** and ***How come you do me like you do** (both played by Gene Rodemich's Orchestra).
- 2835.—**Oh, Katharina!** and **Titina** (both played by Carl Fenton's Orchestra).

(All the Brunswick records can be relied upon to give a good volume of sound.)

BELTONE (10in., 2s. 6d.).

- 805.—**If you will not and Now it is Springtime** (waltz) (both played by the Cosmopolitan Dance Orchestra.)
- 806.—****Bouquet** (vocal chorus) and ****Poem** (waltz) (both played by the Avenue Dance Orchestra.) The vocal chorus is quite good. There is little to choose between this *Poem* and the Aco one below.
- 807.—***Don't bring Lulu** (one-step, vocal chorus) and ***All the nice girls are in the ballroom** (both played by the Avenue Dance Orchestra).
- 808.—**Yum tum tum** and ****Kickin' the clouds away** (both played by the Premier Dance Orchestra).
- 809.—***Hawaiian Ripples** and ***Most of all I want your love** (both waltzes played by the Palm Beach Marimba Band). This record is very good of its kind.

ACO (10in., 2s. 6d.).

- G.15729.—****All the nice girls are in the ballroom** and ****Bouquet** (vocal chorus) (both played by Jeffries and his Rialto Orchestra).
- G.15730.—***Yum tum tum** and **Don't bring Lulu** (one-step, vocal chorus) (both played by Jeffries and his Rialto Orchestra).
- G.15731.—**Kickin' the clouds away** and **Poem** (valse) (both played by Jeffries and his Rialto Orchestra).
- G.15732.—**My blushing rose** (The Old Virginians) and ****You and I** (The Ohio Novelty Band).

VOCALION (10in., 3s.).

- X.9592.—****Lucky Kentucky** and ****Alabama Bound** (both piano duets by Carrol Gibbons and Arthur Young). Superb playing but hardly suitable for dancing.
- X.9593.—****Will you remember me?** (Ben Selvin and his Orchestra) and **When I think of you** (The Ambassadors).
- X.9594.—***While Hawaiian stars are gleaming** (waltz played by the Miami Marimba Band) and **Swanee Butterfly** (Ben Selvin and his Orchestra).

X.9601.—***Seventeen** (waltz played by the Miami Marimba Band) and ***Wait till the morning after** (vocal chorus) (Austin Wylie's Golden Pheasant Orchestra).

X.9602.—**We're back together again** (Austin Wylie's Golden Pheasant Orchestra) and ***Oh, Katharina!** (Ben Bernie and his Hotel Roosevelt Orchestra).

X.9603.—**Yearning** and **I had someone else before I had you** (both played by Ben Bernie and his Hotel Roosevelt Orchestra).

X.9604.—***Just a little drink** (vocal chorus) (The Tuxedo Orchestra) and ***Don't bring Lulu** (Ben Selvin and his Orchestra).

X.9605.—***Midnight Waltz** (Miami Marimba Band) and ***Happy Melody** (Ben Bernie and his Hotel Roosevelt Orchestra).

X.9606.—***Rose of Japan** and ***Honolulu** (both played by Geoffrey Goodhart and his Orchestra).

X.9607.—***I can't realise you love me** and **Ukulele Lady** (both played by Geoffrey Goodhart and his Orchestra).

X.9618.—***Pango Pango Maid** and **Cheatin' on me** (both played by Ben Bernie and his Hotel Roosevelt Orchestra).

X.9619.—***Twilight, the Stars, and you** and ***Oh, Vera!** (both played by the Ambassadors).

IMPERIAL (10in., 2s.).

1464.—***Ah! Ha!** (Hollywood Dance Orchestra) and ****Indian Dawn** (Imperial Dance Orchestra).

1465.—***Why do I love you?** (Hollywood Dance Orchestra) and **If you knew Susie** (Moulin Rouge Orchestra).

1466.—**Bygones** (waltz) (Hollywood Dance Orchestra) and ****The Midnight Waltz** (Bar Harbour Society Orchestra).

PARLOPHONE (12in., 4s. 6d.; 10in., 2s. 6d.).

11347 (12in.).—****Donauwellen** and ****La Demoiselle du Cinéma** (both played by the Marek Weber Orchestra).

10348 (12in.).—**Lucky Hours** and ****Foxfever** (both played by the Marek Weber Orchestra).

10349 (12in.).—**Oh! Be careful** and ***Panama** (both played by the Edith Lorand Orchestra).

5400.—***Florida** and ***Steppin' in Society** (both played by the Melody Sheiks).

5401.—****China girl** and ****Indian Dawn** (both played by Jimmie Joy's St. Anthony Hotel Orchestra).

5402.—***Birmingham Bound** (Emerson Gill and his Orchestra) and **Let me linger longer in your arms** (The Melody Sheiks).

5403.—***Isn't she the sweetest thing?** (The Melody Sheiks) and ***You and I** (Vincent Rizzo and his Hotel Sylvania Orchestra).

5404.—****The Blue Danube Waltz** and **Beautiful Summer Night Waltz** (both played by the Edith Lorand Orchestra).

H.M.V. (10in., 3s.).

B.2072.—****Who told you?** and ****Feelin' kind o' blue** (both played by Jack Hylton and his Orchestra). Vocal choruses a little strident.

B.2074.—**Because of you the world is mine** and **Oh! how I miss you to-night** (both played by the Benson Orchestra of Chicago). Perfect orchestration.

B.2076.—****Waitin' for the moon** and **Charleston** (both played by the Savoy Orpheans). This record is of particular interest on account of the Charleston, a new dance rhythm.

B.2077.—****No, No, Nanette, Medley** and ****Rose Marie, Medley** (both played by the Savoy Orpheans). No one can be without this record.

B.2078.—***Sweet Georgia Brown** (Oliver Naylor's Orchestra) and ****Mamie** (Jan Garber and his Orchestra).

B.2079.—**Montmartre Rose** (Jan Garber and his Orchestra) and **Slowin' down Blues** (Oliver Naylor's Orchestra).

B.2085.—**Naila** (Savoy Havana Band) and ****The melody that made you mine** (Savoy Orpheans).

The above H.M.V. records, almost without exception, are notable for absence of surface noise and for their fine volume of sound.

CORRESPONDENCE

De Gustibus Non Est Disputandum.

[All letters and manuscripts should be written on one side only of the paper and should be addressed to the Editor, The Gramophone, 58, Frith Street, London, W.1. The writer's full name and address must be given. A stamped envelope must be enclosed if an answer or the return of the manuscript is desired. The Editor wishes to emphasise the obvious fact that the publication of letters does not imply his agreement with the views expressed by correspondents.]

HISTORICAL RECORDS.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—I was very much interested to note a question asked by "C. C., Oakleigh Park," (N. and Q., July, page 100, No. 320), regarding a record made by Browning, which was mentioned in Sir J. Forbes Robertson's book. A few years ago before I started to make a collection of records I made a clipping from one of our papers which I quote:—

"VOICES THAT WILL LIVE FOR EVER."

"It is not generally known, but there are many of the leading personages of the last century whose voices will never die. These records which are a part of the Edison collection at Menlo Park, N.J. When the Edison machine for the reproduction of speech was perfected, the inventor sent a representative around the world for the purpose of interviewing famous people and persuading them to speak into a phonograph. Thus Gladstone can be heard congratulating Edison on his wonderful inventive genius, King Edward expresses his astonishment and admiration at being able to hear voices reproduced by a machine. Tennyson reads a verse from one of his poems. Browning tries to recite and fails. Among others Cardinal Manning, the Duke of Clarence, Lord Salisbury, and the Duke of Cambridge contributed to this wonderful collection which cost a great deal of money."

I had misplaced this article and only found it a few months ago, and I wrote to the Edison Company in New Jersey and asked if these records were still available. They replied that the records had been available to the public until 1914, when the building which contained all their equipment and the masters and everything connected with them had been destroyed by fire, and they no longer could supply them. No doubt your questioner "C. C." is a collector of rare records like these as I am myself. I want all of them very badly, but how is one to get them? There surely must be someone who has copies of them; the records, of course, were made on old-fashioned cylinders.

Did Sir J. Forbes Robertson ever make a record of his wonderful voice? I feel sure there must be a great many historical records besides those listed in "H.M.V. Catalogue No. 2," and I should like very much to obtain a list of them. Can any of your many readers give us some more information on the subject?

I should like to know whether the following persons ever made a record, either as a soloist or as an accompanist: Jean de Reszke, Edouard de Reszke, Emma Albani, Lilli Lehman, Cecil Chaminade, Puccini, Debussy, Moszkowski, Massenet, Mascagni, Leschetizky, Tosti, Henry Irving, Lasalle, Minnie Hauk... Did Sarah Bernhardt ever make more than the two records which appear in H.M.V. No. 2 Catalogue? Did she not make some for Pathé, and are they available? Did Eleanor Duse ever make a record? Did Edward Grieg make more than the one record which appears in H.M.V. No. 2?

Your magazine is a gold mine of information and I appreciate every page of it.

Chicago.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. OMAN.

[Our correspondent bids fair to exhaust the gold mine, but as he has also sent us a Victor catalogue of withdrawn Red Seal records which incidentally shows that there are no less than five records made by Madame Zélie de Lussan, the original Carmen, he is forgiven and even welcomed. We shall soon have to start a Collector's Corner. With regard to the specific questions asked, probably other readers will be able to supplement the following notes which have been mostly supplied by the courtesy of the Gramophone Co. Jean de Reszke probably recorded in the old cylinder days, but never for H.M.V. Edouard de Reszke made

some records for Columbia in about 1903. Emma Albani is only represented by H.M.V. 03014, *Angels ever bright and fair*. Chaminade made six records, 5552-5557. Puccini, no. Debussy, D.A.155, accompaniment to *Nuits d'Etoiles*. Bernhardt made one or two records many years ago but the matrices have now been destroyed and no pressings are available. Grieg, D.B.803 (Catalogue No. 2.) The answer to the rest, except for Lilli Lehman, who is in the German Odeon Catalogue, is apparently in the negative.—ED.]

THE TESTS.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—... We all—I think I am voicing the general opinion—owe a very great debt of gratitude to the artists who came along and gave us such a charming interlude between the two halves of the more strenuous business of the evening. I think it was perfectly topping of them. As to the tests themselves, it was very pleasing to find that their skill as "hewers of wood" did not avail the manufacturers of the higher-priced machines, and that a "Horse artillery polish" did not overawe the judges. Perhaps the prices had the desired effect. In some cases they are enough to cause that well-known disease—"paralysis of the passbook." Of course some of the chief culprits in this respect were not in court and I really don't think they were very much missed.

After all, an adequate gramophone can be made for a very small price. Two guineas for a sound-box, for instance, is an absurd price for these days of capstan lathes, while the prices charged for tone-arms and motors are laughable when viewed from the standpoint of an engineering production. Compare the price of the average gramophone with that of a sewing machine in which there is infinitely more work, or a clock, and you will see my point....

Woolwich.

Yours sincerely,

PHILIP J. C. WHEELER.

A DEFENDER.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—We have read with amusement the letter sent to you, under challenge to publish, by Mr. W. J. Creese, of 75, Felbridge Road, East Dulwich, S.E. Whereas the first part of this strange document is entirely beneath our criticism, the last paragraph has a strong interest, we venture to think, not only to us but to all stall-holders. It reads as follows: "Traders who rented space there did so to show and sell their goods, not to have a possible purchaser's interest spoilt by somebody or the other's speech, no matter how eminent they happened to be in their particular profession."

To be quite frank, we can prove that the speeches made had a large influence, and from the writer's personal experience (having been present during the whole of the Congress), did much to induce visitors to take a very serious view of the possibilities to be achieved between the record and the miniature score. The latter, of course, applies to us only, but the results to all the stall-holders were highly gratifying, and the writer has taken the trouble to make careful enquiries and, as a result, can endorse the sentiments of those holding stalls, that their presence at the Congress gave them a material result entirely to their satisfaction.

Mr. Creese does not seem to be aware that no stall-holder takes up a position in any public function or exhibition with the idea of making profit. This is done as a means of advertisement, and there is no question of profit on the "Cash over the counter" principle.

We can testify (and our figures are open to any reader), that the results are, as far as our own stall is concerned, so satisfactory that as the chairman, I heartily congratulate THE GRAMOPHONE on behalf of my company, on their enterprise in undertaking the first venture of this kind, viz., *The first Gramophone Congress*, and far from "causing a lack of confidence" (as Mr. Creese puts it), it has greatly enhanced it, and strengthened the future of a paper which has our entire and unsolicited support.

All good wishes from yours faithfully,

For GOODWIN AND TABB (1924) LTD.

G. R. HEIZMANN,

Chairman and Managing Director.

34, Percy Street, London, W. 1.

RECORDING THE ORCHESTRA.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—I have been perusing Mr. Gilman's letter on this subject in the August number and fancy he has confused the issue somewhat by writing about the opera and symphony orchestras in the same breath, so to speak. It is notorious that the companies' chief concern in operatic records is the artiste and the accompaniment is too frequently "a few instruments in a confined space." There are, of course, a few noteworthy exceptions such as the H.M.V. Wagners. Mr. Gilman is mistaken, however, in supposing that the same economy of means is employed for symphonic reproductions. In the case of two of the best known symphony orchestras recording I have it from the conductors themselves that orchestras of 40 performers were engaged, a number which hardly comes under the heading of "a few instruments."

Yours faithfully,
R. GOODCHILD.

Sutton,

WAGNER ON POLYDOR AND H.M.V.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

SIR,—I should like to thank your correspondent, Mr. Maurice W. Bateman, for his valuable letter in the August GRAMOPHONE. Thanks to his notes I have now learnt of five records of *The Ring* that I do not possess. May I, in turn, offer him the following numbers, which do not seem to appear in his list? :—

Rheingold.—(1) Polydor B.22179: Michael Bohnen, *Abendlich strahlt*; this record comes after *Erda's Warnung*, but before the orchestral H.M.V. D.503.

Siegfried.—(2) Polydor B.22144: Theodor Lattermann, *Auf wolkgigen Höhen*. This comes before the *Forging Song*, H.M.V. D.700. (3) Polydor 3-44121: Ernst Kraus and Waldemar Henke, *Wir sind zur Stelle*, and, reverse, *Doch heisse mich das*. (4) Polydor O.44289: Ernst Kraus and Julius Lieban, *Sieh, du bist müde*. The reverse of this, *Er sinnt und er wägt*, has five lines, at its end, that are omitted from H.M.V. D.700 (b). In Schott and Co.'s edition of the German libretto, with Jameson's translation, the above records will be paged as follows: No. 1, page 73, *Rheingold* No. 2, pages 23 and 24; No. 3, pages 49 to 53; No. 4, pages 67 to 69, *Siegfried*.

I sincerely hope that Mr. Bateman does not know of these discs as, in that case, I shall be making him some return for the help his letter has given me.

Fulham, S.W. 6.

Yours faithfully,
JACK STCLAIR DESMONDE.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—With reference to Mr. Maurice W. Bateman's very useful letter in the August number: Polydor have in the *Rheingold*, *Abendlich strahlt*, Bohnen, coming after the Incantation of the Thunder. This is played by H.M.V. in their *Entry of the Gods*. Odeon have some *Walküre* records not contained in either H.M.V. or Polydor. It would be a great help to buyers if the H.M.V. catalogue gave first lines instead of, or in addition to, such titles as *Wotan warns Brünnhilde not to disobey*, which is of no use for reference.

Herne Hill.

Yours faithfully,
W. G. W.

NATIONAL GRAMOPHONIC SOCIETY



NOW is the Psychological Moment!



Write to Hon. Sec., N.G.S., 58, Frith
Street, W.1, after reading page 188.

PIANO RECORDS.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—One is very glad to see the *G minor Ballade* of Chopin figure in the H.M.V. catalogue; it is a wonderful piece of recording, although the actual interpretation rather leaves one breathless; it is difficult to believe that Cortot was once a pupil of Decombes, who studied under Chopin. Cortot is, perhaps, heard to the best advantage in the works of his own countrymen—namely, Debussy, César Franck, and Ravel—his playing does not lend itself to the rendering of Chopin, on account of its steely brilliance. But why it was elected to begin this ballad halfway through is a complete mystery! There was no apparent reason for so doing as the whole of this beautiful work, which surely is worth recording in full, could have easily been accommodated on two sides of a 12in. record or possibly a 10in. record. Anybody who is at all acquainted with this piece must have been shocked, the same as I was, by the most inartistic and drastic opening, for it starts with several crashing chords on the top of a climax without any introduction whatever, the whole of the delightful opening matter being omitted! For some inexplicable reason the other side of the record is occupied with the *Impromptu in F sharp major*, which has already been very finely recorded by Moiseiwitch, and now, in the advance list for August, we learn that this work is once again recorded by de Pachmann, whose records, unfortunately so scarce, are always welcome.

Why certain pieces are duplicated and triplicated in this way is baffling to the ordinary person. The recording companies are wrong if they imagine the average enthusiast is anxious to acquire more than one record of a certain work for the sake of comparison. The same applies to Liszt's *Liebestraum* (of which there must be at least five or six examples) and several others.

Finally, I would once again point out the necessity of avoiding "cuts," especially now that pianoforte recording has reached such a high pitch of perfection, for surely even the most captious critic will find little to complain of at this last H.M.V. production. In all good music the composer has usually a certain scheme to work out, and in order to ensure its continuity, it is difficult, if not impossible, to omit any part of it without sacrificing its effectiveness to some degree, and perpetrating an injustice on the unfortunate composer.

I am, yours faithfully,
Norbury.
LESLIE HILL.

PLAYING WITH THE GRAMOPHONE.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

SIR,—I was much interested to read Mr. Luetchford's short article in the July GRAMOPHONE, as I have followed his example to some extent—my instrument being the piano. My method is as follows. When I purchase a symphony record I also obtain the miniature score of the work. I play the records over two or three times on the gramophone following closely with the score. Next I write out a skeleton piano part, including therein any melodies played by the various instruments which do not "come through" when playing the records. The double bass part I, of course, include *in extenso*, thereby covering up the horrible grunts emitted by the new instrument invented by the gramophone companies to play the part usually allotted to the double basses. I should say that this is the only instance (excepting the Æolian harp) in which a stringed instrument is blown.

I get much enjoyment in playing my piano part with the orchestra, and many beauties are revealed which the records fail to reproduce satisfactorily—e.g., tunes on the oboe which seldom stand out on the gramophone against the other instruments. In this particular respect it is interesting to compare Polydor and English records. The German oboe seems to "come through" better than the English instrument.

Again, in some cases a piano accompaniment goes well with a vocal solo recorded with orchestral accompaniment. For example, Cherubino's two airs out of *Figaro*, sung by Elisabeth Schumann, and the *Liebestod* from *Tristan*, sung by Frida Leider, all three recorded on Polydor. For some reason or other the orchestral accompaniments in these three records are elusive and the piano accompaniment is effective. With regard to instrumental solos, I often wonder why the companies do not set out to provide records of the string parts only of such things as sonatas for violin and piano, trios for violin, cello, and pianoforte. I am sure that many pianists would welcome with open arms the opportunity to take part in such works with Mr. Catterall and other famous artists.

Faithfully yours,
Cricklewood.
F. N. WHITTLE.

AN ACADEMY of RECORDED MUSIC

THE following scheme in outline has been sent to us by our valued contributor, "Indicator," and deserves the careful consideration of all the members of gramophone societies. If the response of secretaries is encouraging we shall be proud to take the part assigned to us in the scheme.

ACADEMY OF RECORDED MUSIC

During the year gramophone societies to hold amongst themselves quarterly test meetings, at which members would vote on the best records currently and retrospectively issued — three orchestral, three vocal, and three instrumental; result to be sent quarterly to 58, Frith Street. At end of year, each record winning majority of votes of all societies, total thirty-six records, to be played at annual recital before audience and an honorary committee of the Academy, the latter consisting of distinguished personages in the musical world, whose combined vote—audience and committee—would decide the finalist records: four orchestral, four vocal and four instrumental, to

be placed on an official First Honours List of the Academy of Recorded Music. A sub-list would contain the twelve next best records.

I would suggest it should be started on this simple basis; any desired development could come later.

Whilst initiated and organised by THE GRAMOPHONE, the status of the A.R.M. would be entirely independent and honorary, and the A.R.M. would consist of the Grand Committee presiding at the annual recital and giving their *imprimatur* to the collective choices of the movement as a whole. No elections would be necessary, as it would be a voluntary function offered to any musical notability able to be present on the occasion.

Secretaries of societies are asked to take the opinion of their confrères, and specifically undertake to help as above, when the date can be announced for starting.

Any communications on this subject should be addressed to THE GRAMOPHONE, 58, Frith Street, London, W.1, and marked on the envelope "A.R.M."



Gramophone Societies' Reports

EAST LONDON GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—The ninetieth monthly meeting of the East London Gramophone Society was held on Saturday last, 15th inst., at Headquarters, 15, Broadway, Stratford. The original programme had, unfortunately, to be altered in many instances owing to members being away on holiday, but notwithstanding the attendance being smaller than usual, the proceedings were greatly enjoyed by those present. Amongst the many excellent records played, perhaps those to come in for most applause were the *Improviso* sung by Lappas, *Come sweet death*, a viola solo played by Lionel Tertis, Grieg's *Concerto in A minor*, played by Arthur de Greef and the Royal Albert Hall Orchestra, and *The Erl King*, sung by Roy Henderson. Much humour was provided by Will Evans in that side-splitting sketch, *Building a Chicken-house*. Many discussions were entered into on the records played and in the case of those from operas descriptive notes were given by the chairman, Mr. Harley, or from the member to whom the record belonged. The hon. secretary demonstrated several H.M.V. and Columbia records from the August lists, a feature appreciated by the members because of the knowledge obtained of the various activities of the record companies.

Although there is an ever-increasing membership to the Society, more gramophonists are invited to join or attend the meetings which are held on the third Saturday in each month at the Langthorne Restaurant, 15, Broadway, Stratford. Full particulars will be sent on application to the Hon. Secretary, 209, Masterman Road, East Ham, E. 6.

THE SOUTH LONDON GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—It is gratifying to record that 42 members were present at the meeting of this Society on July 25th, pointing to the fact that there exists a membership sufficiently loyal and interested to put themselves unreservedly at the disposal of the muse. In a recent report mention was made of the "cut-out" records from the H.M.V. catalogue of much of Edward German's works, among which was the *Templer Suite*. Here it was presented to us, and it seems

strange that while so much inferior stuff remains (and is still being recorded) more important works have disappeared, it is hoped only temporarily.

The first record by the London String Quartet to be issued, about 1914, contained on one side the *Andante* from Haydn's *Emperor Quartet*, which, strangely enough, disappeared later, perhaps owing to political reasons, although one of the best of their records. The recent re-appearance of the quartet in the Columbia lists was signalled by the complete work, and the old version above-mentioned (which was heard) is stated to be superior. (Perhaps the number of quartets now playing for the gramophone has made us sophisticated!)

When the *Ring* numbers were recorded by H.M.V. it was regrettable that all the members of the B.N.O.C. were not available, otherwise we should possibly have had Norman Allin in his well-known part of Hagen. As it is we have on Columbia *Hagen's Watch* and the *Summon to the Vassals*. The former was played, and the present writer considers it superior to Radford's version; here is a more sonorous voice, or so it sounds, and the atmosphere is better conveyed. An old favourite, *My snowy-breasted pearl* was given by McCormack; this is quite good, and was made in his pre-nasal days. A novelty was a Parlophone record by the Irmler Ladies' Choir of Mendelssohn's *Ich wollt meine liebe ergösse sich*. All the records by this choir are worth having, especially the Mendelssohn items, which show an aspect of his genius which is not generally recognised. Mr. Coombs produced the third movement from the *Pathétique Symphony* by the New Queen's Hall Orchestra as a final item.

A year ago the Society introduced a programme devoted to modern dance music, and once again we listened to a further selection presented by our member, Mr. Gayton. It is evident that there are possibilities in this type of music, and much of it is very attractive. We do not know, however, if the prevailing style is symptomatic of a revolution, nor if it has yet exhausted

itself, but the practice of treating in a harsh and often blatant manner works that have established themselves as classics for many years, would seem to show that syncopated music must be approached from a different standpoint and written in a larger and more comprehensive style.

A great deal of attention is being paid to the Polydor records, one of the chief reasons being, no doubt, that there are now available works that have long been wanted and which should have been in the English lists years ago. In addition acquaintance is being made with many fine artists who were practically unknown in the gramophone world before, and who, some of them, have made their appearance concurrently in this country. Mr. East included several of these in his programme, viz.: Schubert's *Der Wanderer*, by Paul Bender; *Du Armste kannst wohl nie ermessen* from *Lohengrin*, by Lotte Lehmann; *Mein liebe Schwan* from the same, by Robert Hutt (this, if memory serves, was the first occasion on which this number had been heard under the auspices of the Society—a tribute to its rarity!). One of Lucrezia Bori's best records, *O gioia, la nube leggiera*, from *Suzanna's Secret*, and Schumann's *Du bist wie eine Blume*, a Victor record by Paul Reimers, completed an enjoyable programme.—S. F. D. HOWARTH, *Reporting Secretary*.

THE EALING RECORDED MUSIC SOCIETY.—The Orchorsol Gramophone Co. honoured us with a demonstration on their gold medal instrument, and an excellent programme at our meeting on Thursday, Aug. 6th. Mr. Ross, our chairman, in a few brief words, introduced Mr. Brayne, of the Orchorsol Co., who in reply expressed his pleasure and pride in having the opportunity to demonstrate the Orchorsol to so critical an audience. The first part of the programme was supplied by Mr. Brayne and included amongst other excellent items: *Largo* (Handel), Marek Weber Trio (Parlophone), an excellent record; *Una voce* (Rossini), Galli-Curci, (H.M.V.); *Etude in A flat major, Op. 25, No. 1* (Chopin), Alfred Cortot (H.M.V.); *Murmuring Breezes* (Jenson), Warwick Evans (Vocalion); *Elégie* (Massenet), Caruso and Elman (H.M.V.); *Habanera* (*Carmen*) (Bizet), Marguerite D'Alvarez (Vocalion); *Quintet, Op. 44, Scherzo* (Schumann), London String Quartette (Vocalion); *William Tell Overture, Part II* (Rossini), Life Guards (Vocalion); *The Desert* (Emmanuel), Malcolm McEachern (Vocalion); *Piano trio in C flat, Op. 100* (Schubert), N.G.S. record.

After a short interval the Society selection was played, consisting of new issues with fibre needles; there was a marked difference in the quality of tone, due, I think, to a different sound-box being used. But altogether the programme was a pronounced success. A hearty vote of thanks was accorded Mr. Brayne to which he suitably responded. Our September programme will consist of a selection of Schubert's compositions and some new issues. The annual meeting will take place in October, when the officers will be elected for the ensuing year.—R. J. PAINE, *Hon. Secretary*.

THE BRIXTON GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—The Society's programme for the coming season includes a demonstration (on October 6th) of the Apollo Super IV. gramophone, a further series of Mr. G. W. Webb's very valuable technical talks, and the usual members' demonstrations, the first of which will be given (on Sept. 1st) by Mr. H. Virtz. We have also arranged for a lecture-demonstration (on November 3rd) on "How Records are Made," illustrated by "Masters," and other interesting features.

The Society has increased in membership very considerably during the past season, and the Committee have every reason to hope that, well as it has done in the past, the Society will do even better in the future as there is no aspect of the gramophone with which it is not concerned. The chief officers are: Recording Secretary, S. N. Collins, Esq.; Musical Adviser, J. W. Borders, Esq.—J. T. FISHER, *Hon. Secretary and Treasurer*.

MANCHESTER GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—The July meeting of the Society, held in the large hall of the Onward Buildings, proved an extremely interesting one. A joint programme was provided by Messrs. D. L. Lloyd and E. Timmis, all the items being of a particularly popular and varied nature. The most outstanding record of Mr. Timmis's selection was undoubtedly Eli Hudson's flute solo, *Du, Du liegst mir in Herzen*, an H.M.V. record, followed closely by two Brunswick records, *O Lovely May*, by Ivogin, and *Alleluja*, by Sigrid Onégén, while the Parlophone record, *Memories of Brahms*, by the Edith Lorand Orchestra, and a violin record, *If you have loved me*, by Manuella (Regal) were the pick of Mr. Lloyd's contributions. At the close a very hearty vote of thanks was passed to the two demonstrators for their excellent and

carefully-chosen entertainment. In addition to this general programme was added a remarkably novel and realistic demonstration by Mr. D. H. Blaikie, of a number of items on the Stentorphone. Most of the members confessed to having come with a feeling of apprehension that they would be overwhelmed with a stupendous volume of sound, but instead of this they heard to their surprise an instrument possessing remarkable sweetness and clarity of tone, responding perfectly to modulation to the size of the hall, and at the same time producing certain effects of realism utterly unobtainable on the ordinary gramophone. This was most vividly shown in a carillon record of the *Bells of Bournville*, which, though played on a large H.M.V. gramophone, was yet merely a pale and unconvincing reproduction of bells, but on the Stentorphone the contrast was absolutely startling; one then literally felt the real presence of actual bells apparently clanging and pealing in the room itself. Scarcely less amazing was the realism of an organ record of Bach's *Fugue in D minor* (Columbia) as reproduced on the Stentorphone, as also an unmistakable band effect in the Parlophone record *Ecstasy Intermezzo* (Ganne). The general opinion of the audience was one of complete surprise and pleasure at the control of volume and tonal purity obtainable by the Stentorphone in conjunction with its astounding realism, and also that it was a much maligned instrument as judged by the average man-in-the-street's conception of it as being nothing beyond a mere magnifier of sound. The principle of the Stentorphone—with no diaphragm whatever—would appear to possess great possibilities of successful development in the direction of eventually perfect reproduction of music. The Society's appreciation of Mr. Blaikie's kindness in so ably demonstrating the instrument was most cordially voiced by the President, Mr. Rastall, and unanimously endorsed by all present.—C. J. BRENNAND, *Hon. Secretary and Treasurer*.

NORTH-WEST GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—Our meetings will be resumed on the second Sunday in October, and will continue to be held on every second Sunday in the month till July, 1926. Programme: Search for the best records. Officers: President, Mr. V. W. Russell Forbes, 74, Warwick Avenue, W. 9. Hon. Treasurer and Accountant, Miss I. G. Eaton, 40, Arundel Gardens, W. 11. Hon. General Secretary, Miss F. A. Smith, 18, Ladbrooke Gardens, W. 11. Hon. Secretary Vocal Section, Mr. F. D. Venn, 9, Pembroke Gardens, W. 2. Hon. Secretary Instrumental, Orchestral, and Chamber Music, Mr. E. G. Lamble, 51, Balmoral Road, N.W. 2. Subscription, half a guinea.

We hope to join the National Gramophonic Society soon, but at present neither our finances or our membership justifies the expenditure.—V. W. RUSSELL FORBES.

THE BEETHOVEN GRAMOPHONE STUDY CIRCLE.—The first meeting of the above circle was held on Monday evening, August 17th, 1925, at 7 p.m. Mr. S. E. Willetts presided and also gave the programme on His Master's Voice cabinet model. The evening was spent with the *First, Second, and Third Symphonies* of Parlophone and also parts of the *Seventh*. Explanatory notes were given from Fred Crowest's book on Beethoven, and also humorous incidents in the master's life. The Secretary was instructed to write and thank the Parlophone Co. for the two large photographs of Dr. Weissmann and Eduard Mörike, with suggestions for further works. Our next meeting will be held on Sept. 7th, when the *Fourth Symphony* (Parlophone), *Fifth* (H.M.V.), and *Sixth* (Parlophone), also Tudor Davies in *Adelaide*, and the Hekking Trio (Parlophone) in the *Andante* with variations. A prominent musician of the district has promised to give us notes on the above and also "Studies in Comparison." Membership fee, 5s. per annum. Write for particulars to S. E. WILLETTS, 175, Cannock Road, Chadsmoor, Cannock, Staffs.

To N.G.S. Members

Just as we go to press comes a message that one of the Brahms Sextet master records has been damaged at the factory. This is sad news; it involves a re-recording, and Mr. Spencer Dyke is still in the country. But members may be assured that we shall do our best to get the records out before Michaelmas.



THE NEW-POOR PAGE

Half-Crown and Two-Shilling
records good on both sides



SOME old favourites are missing from among the really good recordings this month, but on the whole they constitute a wonderful August bulletin.

ACO.—VIOLIN: *Minuet in G* (Beethoven), played by Andjelkovich, who handles the bow firmly and is well recorded. ORCHESTRAL: *Folie Bergère*, with a suitable light coupling. CONTRALTO: Miss Stella Murray this month confirms her reputation for consistently clean performances with *O Men from the Fields* (Herbert Hughes), and this is coupled with a queer bagpipe-like number from *Songs of the Hebrides*. BRASS BAND: In common with the other brass band numbers on this list *The Nightingale* is an excellent record for those who use romantic needles or a romantic sound-box, but on my machine it sounds like a rather unrestrained band playing in a band room.

BELTONA.—I do not know which to put first, a VIOLIN solo *Vision* (Franz Drdla) or the SOPRANO record of *Villanelle*, sung in English, both are so good. Ethel Kemish, SOPRANO, sings *In an Old Fashioned Town* very nicely, and Minnie Mearns gives us the best of her SCOTS SONGS to date in *Fair fa' the Gloamin'*. CHILDREN'S NUMBER: *Hawaiian Ripples*. MILITARY BAND: Coleridge Taylor's *Hiawatha* selection. The clarionets are rather too close to the recording horn except for romantic reproducing apparatus. WALTZ: *Now it is Springtime*, an obvious but sweet little melody perfectly treated. FOX-TROT: *Yum Tum Tum*, very cleverly humorous.

GRAFTON.—*My Lady of the Cigarette* will give students of harmony something to think about.

HOMOCHORD.—There is no 10in. piano record this month, so, a little prematurely, I will mention Schumann's *Etudes Symphoniques* played by Leo Sirota. This is the first of three discs; the remaining two of the set will be published in September and October respectively.

IMPERIAL.—Followers of Robert Kinnear in popular songs will want *Tell me More and Tell all the World*. DANCE: *The Midnight Waltz* from "The Music Box Revue."

PARLOPHONE.—Very welcome indeed is the Edith Lorand ORCHESTRA half-crown waltz record *Beautiful Summer Night*, and there is one of their always well recorded PIANOFORTE fox-trots—*The Rocks*.

REGAL.—There is an exceedingly clean rendering of the charming old song *Long ago in Alcalá*, sung by Robert Layton, and the best DANCE rendering of *The Toy Drum Major* I have yet heard.

ZONOPHONE.—The beautiful surface now gives the highly satisfactory vocal recording on this list its due. BASS: *The Sea Hawk* (Tonbridge), sung by Foster Richardson is a good example. Among the POPULAR SONGS I prefer *Springtime and Love*. For DANCE music I think the best numbers are *Me Neenyah* and *Loving Lullaby*.

* * *

A wonderful old process 12in. Columbia double was *Marche Slav* and *The Ride of the Valkyries*; last year I wrote about it, but my friends, on trying to buy, found it had been taken off the list. Will they please note that both these compositions, played by a large orchestra of the highest class

(and each is most admirably coupled with another fine work), are now obtainable on 12in. (4s.) Beltonas. They are both vigorously performed and recorded, *obviously well rehearsed*, and the instruments are correctly placed; every tone quality, from the kettle-drums to the piccolo, being true to life.

* * *

From the foregoing the following are going into my own collection:—

ORCHESTRAL.	<i>Marche Slav</i>	.	BELTONA
	<i>Ride of the Valkyries</i>	.	BELTONA
PIANOFORTE.	<i>Etudes Symphoniques</i>	.	HOMO.
VIOLIN.	<i>Minuet in G</i>	.	ACO
SOPRANO	<i>Villanelle</i>	.	BELTONA
CONTRALTO	<i>O Men from the Fields</i>	.	ACO
TENOR.	<i>Long Ago in Alcalá</i>	.	REGAL
BASS	<i>The Sea Hawk</i>	.	ZONO.
WALTZ.	<i>Beautiful Summer Night</i>	.	PARLO.
FOX TROT	<i>The Rocks (P.F.)</i>	.	PARLO.

* * *

N.B.—I have purposely refrained from giving catalogue information because I wish readers to get the lists containing any numbers they fancy from their dealers, and then if they do not like the pair on the record I have mentioned they may be tempted to try another record of the same series.

Everyone should remember that machines having small horns (resonators) will not respond fully to the tone of instruments having large resonators or large resonating columns of air.

H. T. B.

Gramophone Tips

By

CAPT. H. T. BARNETT, M.I.E.E.

1/- post free.

From the London Office of "The Gramophone"